A DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE

FULTON J. SHEEN

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A Declaration of Dependence

FULTON J. SHEEN
PH.D., D.D., LITT.D., LL.D., L.H.D.
Agrégé en Philosophie de l'Université de Louvain
and
The Catholic University of America

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DEDICATED

TO

MARY IMMACULATE MOTHER OF GOD

GRACIOUS QUEEN OF CHRIST'S AFFLICTED ONES

IN PRAYERFUL PETITION

THAT THE GLORIOUS PEACE OF CHRIST

MAY REIGN IN THE SOULS OF MEN

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I

The Revolutionary Tempo

THE SPIRIT OF REVOLUTION HAS THREE CHARACTERISTIC notes. It is: (1) irrational, (2) violent, (3) atheistic.

1. IRRATIONAL

To be rational means to think before acting. We do not just suddenly find ourselves standing in a telephone booth; a reason preceded and determined our presence there. As St. John expressed it, "In the beginning was the *Word*" — first the Word, the Idea, the Thought, Reason: then the action, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."[1]

The irrational is just the contrary. It is the primacy of action over idea: first you act and then you think why you did it. As Goethe put it: "In the beginning was the Deed." Reason exists, according to this philosophy, merely to justify action or to rationalize an evil. Ideas have value only as fuel for dynamic action; the history of thought is only the history of aggressive action. Ideas are not sources of creativeness but, as one jurist in America believes, just "instruments of power"; that is, one uses an idea to further his power, and when it ceases to be useful he scraps it and substitutes another. Not justice but opportunism becomes the rule.

[1] John 1:1, 14.

Irrationality developed quickly in the modern world after it lost faith in God. In 1870 the Council of the Vatican had to remind the rationalists that if they used their reason they could know God. The attitude of the Church rightly was: reason must be either a product of Divine Reason or blind matter. If it is the former, it is an intellectualism which can be complemented by faith; if the latter, then its root is unreason and its deliverances are illusory. Once rationalism gave up God it wilted like a plant without sunlight. Rationalism, after becoming atheistic, became sentimental or emotional. Then were born the philosophies of "individual or religious experience": "I feel it in here." They substituted the stomach for the head. Later individual emotion became social or collective emotion. Reason or feeling, it was said, is not in man; it is in totality. Truth is correspondence with the whole. Such is the irrationality of Totalitarianism.

Russia ruined France by using the "popular front" as an "instrument of power," and almost ruined us by using the "idea" of democracy to overthrow democracy. "Democracy" to Communism, was a contrivance for the seizure of power, not an ideal to be lived. Germany in like manner used the idea of opposition to Bolshevism as an "instrument of power" to fool the simple until it was ready to join hands with its natural ally, Russia. The same irrationality was at work in Finland. Russia seized Finland and then justified its action on the ground that other nations might have invaded it. If that irrationality becomes popular, it will not be long until you will find

robbers occupying your house on the pretext that they came to protect you from mythical robbers who might steal your watch next year.

This irrationality is manifested further by the fact that practically all revolutions today are without ideologies; if a program does accompany the revolution it is used only as a contrivance for power. Mussolini boasted that he seized power in Italy without a program. Lenin proclaimed a "ruthless struggle against nauseating, sweet social pacifist phrases," because the idea of peace then was useful for revolution. Stalin, claiming to wear the mantle of Lenin, used the same "nauseating pacifist phrases" to preserve his booty in Russia and win more in Europe. Stalin's plea for "peace" today can be understood only in Lenin's irrationality that "whoever wishes a durable and democratic peace must be for civil war." There was once a time when men blushed at being caught in a contradiction, but the insane never do. The Communists who berated the Nazis embraced the Nazis without a blush. In fact, the principal stooge of Stalin in America, who in April, 1939, said that he who asserts that the Nazis and Soviets will sign a treaty is a Fascist and a Nazi, sent a telegram to Stalin, the day after the treaty was signed, complimenting him on the signing of the "long awaited treaty." Yet he told the staff at the *Daily Worker* office the day after that there must have been a mistake. Now the Communists contradict that policy by war with the Nazis.

Hitler, with similar contempt of truth and reason, has written "There is always a certain element of credibility

in the magnitude of a lie, because the broad masses of a nation are more readily corrupt than consciously and deliberately evil, so that, in the primitive simplicity of their souls, they fall victims more easily to a big lie than to a small one, seeing that they themselves sometimes tell small lies but will be too ashamed to tell unduly big ones."[2]

Hermann Rauschning quotes the irrational Hitler as saying: "Providence has ordained that I should be the greatest liberator of humanity. I am freeing men from the restraints of an intelligence that has taken charge; from the dirty and degrading self-mortifications of a chimera called conscience and morality, and from the demands of a freedom and personal independence which only a very few can bear.

"To the Christian doctrine of the infinite significance of the individual human soul and of personal responsibility, I oppose with icy clarity the saving doctrine of the nothingness and insignificance of the individual human being, and of his continued existence in the visible immortality of the nation. The dogma of vicarious suffering and death through a divine savior gives place to that of the representative living and acting of the new Leader-legislator, which liberates the mass of the faithful from the burden of free will."[3]

German philosophy in many instances has manifested this same irrationality. Writers like Dithey, Hartman, Jaspers, and Heidiger make chaos essential to the Abso-

[2] *Mein Kampf,* p. 302.
[3] *The Voice of Destruction* (New York: Putnam, 1940), p. 225.

lute. Without the possibility of ruin all the world will be predetermined. The irrational is the heart of the unconditioned.

Because the spirit of the world is irrational, modern international politics is to a great extent unpredictable. If we have certain doctrines or beliefs, our neighbors rightly expect us to live up to them. But if ideas are only instruments for power, it follows that treaties will be repudiated when they no longer serve power. We can never, for that reason, predict what certain nations will do tomorrow, because they are governed not by reason, which is predictable, but by unrestrained power, which is unpredictable. Like the modern atom, if you know where they are, you do not know how fast they are going; if you know how fast they are going, you do not know where they are.

Another consequence of modern irrationality is the glorification of the myth, which Hitler has rather correctly defined as a slogan for evoking mass-enthusiasm. There is the myth of "race" in Germany, the myth of "class" in Russia, the myth of "nation" in Italy. In totalitarian states, the myth finds its most common expression in marching. Vast armies of men, boys, and girls are seen tramping — going nowhere, never being told where they are going, and soon beginning to care less. It is mass action without reason. And in our own country, the irrational takes on the form of gullibility, a naïve simplicity to believe everything that is said about anyone, particularly the worst. A critical reason never subjects the story or the myth to

analysis; it might be untrue, but it certainly is worth repeating. Thus do we contribute our share to myth, as the spirit of the modern world casts itself before the false god of the irrational, exalts power over truth, the deed over the Word; apotheosizes immediacy, glorifies the uncriticized and uncritizable self-affirmation, and furthers, whether it knows it or not, a revolution whose end is chaos.

2. VIOLENCE

The second characteristic note of the modern world is violence. And it is important to note that violence follows from irrationality. When a man loses his reason, he becomes violent, because reason is the faculty which gives us purposes, goals, ends, and ideals. The loss of purpose is the beginning of the violence. A boiler, for example, has a purpose, namely, the retention of steam at a given pressure for the purposes of heat and power. The boiler received its purpose from a human reason — the mind of an engineer. The moment, however, the boiler loses the purpose imposed upon it by human reason, it explodes. The moment society loses the purpose given it by the Eternal Reason of God, it revolts. Such is the origin of violence.

There has always been violence in the world. It has been estimated that 3130 out of 3357 years have been years of war. From 496 B.C. to A.D. 1860 there were only 227 years of peace. The ratio of war against peace has been 13 to 1. But there is something different about the violence of our day as against the past. We are living in an age of violence

triumphant, when the armed prophet conquers and the unarmed prophet perishes.

One difference between present and past violence is that violence in the past was based upon an affirmation — men loved something so much they resorted to violence to attain it. Today, violence is grounded not on an affirmation, but on a negation. Men are violent not because they love, but because they hate. They are "anti" something, whatever it may be, and as a result confuse their hatred of a person with the justice of their own cause. Propaganda agencies in all countries rely more on the necessity of exposing the vices of their neighbors than of cultivating and preserving their own virtues. It is unfortunate that hatred has become a more rapidly unifying bond among nations than love.

Secondly, violence in the past was based on a universal moral judgment, such as a violation of justice, or the rights of God. But today, universal moral judgments are ignored. What proves it better than the fact that a divorced man who has already broken three marriage bonds is generally the most violent against Hitler for breaking his treaties. A particular hatred against a particular opponent becomes the substitute for a condemnation based on a universally valid moral order. We see this phenomenon most often in protest meetings against persecutions, when groups will protest against a persecution in one country, entirely ignoring persecution in another country. In other words, they pick and choose among barbarities, grow violent about the way religious leaders are thrown into a

German prison but are silent about other leaders in a Mexican prison. This is wrong. These people have no right to speak on the subject of religious persecution. No man has a right to speak on that subject unless he condemns persecution irrespective of where he finds it and irrespective of who is persecuted, whether he be Jew, Protestant, or Catholic.

Finally, violence of other days ended either with the attainment of a purpose, or by exhaustion, or by a return to the past. But today, since violence is secondary to an ideology, it never ends. It is used to maintain a new aristocracy in power – not the aristocracy of blood, or ideas, or wealth, but the new elite of power. This new aristocracy does not care what cause it promotes so long as it can maintain its privileged position. A group would serve Bolshevism in Germany tomorrow, or Nazism in Russia if that were the condition of maintaining their booty and their power. Race is forgotten; class is forgotten; nation is forgotten. Revolution alone remains; only its tempo changes. Periods of explosion are inserted between periods of seeming order, because the enemy can be best attacked when he believes he is at peace. Violence is silenced only to create terror; violence is released to achieve terror. The world thus is made to live in a state of permanent revolution where revolution exists for the sake of revolution.

3. ATHEISM

There is a verse in the Psalms which reads: "The fool hath said in his heart, 'there is no God.' " This has some-

times been interpreted as meaning that the fool's head or intelligence told him there is a God; it was his feelings and baser passions which made him wish there was no God. But the late Holy Father, Pius XI, revealed a still deeper meaning in the verse, namely, the fool said in his heart "There is no God," because he did "not dare or did not think it opportune to reveal too openly his impious mind"; hence he was an atheist only "in the secret of his heart." But "today, on the contrary, atheism has already spread through large masses of the people: well organized, it works its way into the common schools; it appears in theatres . . . it has formed its own economic and military systems . . . it is a lamentable fact that millions of men, under the impression that they are struggling for existence, grasp at such theories to the utter subversion of truth, and cry out against God and Religion. Nor are these assaults directed only against the Catholic Religion, but against all who still recognize God as Creator of heaven and earth, and as absolute Lord of all things."[4]

Atheism is of two kinds; either of the intellect or the will. When the intellect abandons God it creates an idol or a god of its own; for Nazism, "God" is the German race, for Communism, "God" is the revolutionary class, for Fascism, "God" is the nation; for some American intellectuals who have been trained beyond their intelligence and thus become intelligentsia, God is "science," or "progress," or "democracy." When the will abandons God,

[4] *Caritate Compulsi,* The Sacred Heart and World Distress, N.C.W.C. edition, pp. 6–8.

atheism becomes arbitrary self-will or the Will to Power. A human will in the person of a dictator substitutes himself for the will of God, and through violence, cruelty, and propaganda makes his will the absolute which must be obeyed at all costs. This atheism of the will exists in attenuated form in those who accept a god who suits their own whims, fancies, and desires and who never ask what is God's will in religion. Power, in other words, is the result of the will's alienation from God, as self-deification is the result of the reason's alienation.

Modern organized atheism is not individual, but social; not mentally but physically violent, not unbelief but belief. It is a social enthronement of human pride and human power usurping the rights of God. It may seem odd to hear it defined as belief, but such it is. Modern atheism does not deny God, it believes in Him! It does not deny Christ, it believes in Him! It does not deny the Sacraments, it believes in them! It does not believe in the Divine as we believe, with an illumined faith inspired by charity. Modern atheism believes as the demons in hell believe! Satan believes in God, in the Divinity of Christ, in the Eucharist, in the Church, and yet believing he

[8] The demons confessed Christ "I know who Thou art, the holy one of God" (Mark 1:24), but "They tell the truth in order to deceive" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* 1, q. 64, art. 2, *ad* 5). "The demons are in a way compelled to believe by the evidence of signs and their natural intellectual acumen and so their will deserves no praise for their belief" (2–2ae, q. 5, art. 2, *ad* 1, and *ad* 2). "A purely speculative knowledge which comes of grace has not been taken away from the fallen angels, but lessened . . . but of an effective knowledge which produces love they are utterly deprived" (1, q. 64, art. 1).

would destroy.[5] So it is with atheism today. One cannot explain either the intensity of atheistic persecution of religion in Mexico, Spain, Russia, Germany, Poland, Austria, and other countries, or the violence of its antireligion, on the assumption that religion is only a myth. Men do not go into a rage over an illusion; they do not combat phantoms with pitchforks, nor dynamite dreams, nor bomb illusions, nor assassinate fancies, nor throw themselves into frenzies of hate against the man in the moon. The present-day violence against religion can be explained only by the reality of that which is persecuted, namely, God Himself.

Why was it that a few years ago when the Reds pillaged convents in Spain they would ask the Sisters as they met them: "Where is that bread you call God?" If there be no God, then there is no Eucharist. If there be no Eucharist, then why make the distinction between the living bread of souls and the bread of bodies? It was not because they did not believe in the Eucharist, but because they did believe — not as we do, to worship, but as the devil does, to destroy.

A few years ago I encountered a young atheist in the vestibule of a Catholic Church of London who, boasting of her atheism, shouted: "Every night I go out to Hyde Park and talk against God; I urge my listeners to drive the illusion from the earth; I circulate England, Scotland, and Wales with pamphlets denouncing a belief in God."

When she drew a deep breath thus giving me my first opportunity to speak, I said to her: "Suppose I went across

the street here to Soho Square and every night talked against twenty-footed ghosts and ten-legged centaurs; suppose I circulated England, Scotland, and Wales with pamphlets denouncing a belief in twenty-footed ghosts and ten-legged centaurs. What would happen to me?"

She said: "You would be crazy; they would lock you up."

"All right," said I, "why don't they lock you up? Don't you put God in exactly the same category of an illusion as I put a twenty-footed ghost and a ten-legged centaur? Why would I be crazy and not you?" I had to tell her the answer: "Because if I attacked ghosts or centaurs the reason of men and the tradition of mankind would tell me I was attacking a figment of my imagination, which is a mark of insanity. But when you attack God you are attacking something just as real as the thrust of a sword or an embrace. It is the Reality of God which saves you from insanity and gives substance to your attacks."

Her reply was: "I hate you!"

To which I answered: "Now you have answered me. Atheism is not a doctrine; it is a cry of wrath."

Universalize the case and you have the explanation for the vehemence and ferocity of modern atheism. It could not so hate a myth. If there were no God, the rage of atheism would be without foundation. Atheists destroy only because there is something to be destroyed. In a word, they believe. Only where the image of God is can there be the counterfeit; man can set himself up as God only because he came from God. Behind every persecution, every

human perversion, and every violent effort to rid the world of Him, the Divine Original shines forth. Men could not be godless without God; they could not curse God if they were not first loved by God. The wrath of God under which every atheist stands is the Divine Love. The human capacity to love, created by God, has become a force opposed to Him, because it has turned against God. The God whom the atheist hates is the God whom the believer loves.

Organized atheism persecutes because of remorse of conscience. A boy who steals, destroys property, and insults his neighbors, will invariably be revengeful and sarcastic of the honest well-mannered boy. The virtue of the latter is a constant reproach to his baseness. To justify his evil, the bad boy must ridicule the good boy; it salves his conscience.

To organized atheism, in like manner, morality, piety, love of God are constant reproaches to immorality and burdened consciences. Atheists falsely believe that remorse of conscience, a sense of guilt, and the effects of sin are the creation of priests and religious; if they could kill all priests and ministers and rabbis, and raze all churches and synagogues, they could sin with impunity, do wrong without feeling guilty, and lift themselves up to the insane stage where there is no longer a distinction between good and evil and therefore one where man is God and God is nought. They cannot drive God out of the world, so they seek to banish His representatives. That is why they per-

secute! But instead of scaling the heavens and making themselves as gods, they only lay waste the earth.

There is a bond of unity among the enemies of God. A natural affinity exists between a university professor who ridicules the moral law because he breaks it, and the Bolshevist who breaks the moral law because he hates it. As Pilate and Herod shook hands, so enemies become friends when their mutual enemy is God. Satan is the head and the common bond of unity of all the wicked, inasmuch as they imitate him. "All sins agree in aversion from God," says St. Thomas, "although they differ by conversion to different changeable goods."

This is the spirit that makes modern war. Political and economic upheavals are only symptoms of the more radical evil, which is born of *irrationality* because human reason lost its roots when it abandoned the Eternal Reason of God; born of *violence,* because purposeless living is madness; born of *atheism,* because uneasy consciences must persecute goodness. This spirit which makes wars is not exclusively the possession of certain slave states of Europe. It is unfortunately the spirit of many in our own land, who would sabotage our national life. There is *irrationality in America,* for countless are our fellow citizens who are guided by *emotion* rather than by reason, who go on repeating catchwords and slogans which they *never analyze* and who deny there are any basic truths of reason, much less of revelation, by which man can chart the course of his life and discover the goal of his destiny.

There is *violence* too. Witness the potential violence

that is hidden in the intense hatred toward certain persons. Instead of hating the *wrong,* they hate the *person.* The result is that when they find the same wrong in another person, they love it and thus end by picking and choosing among their barbarians and their dictators. No greater symptom of this negative spirit is to be found than the frightening number of people who will hiss in a motion-picture theater when certain personages are flashed across the screen. There is something that crawls on the ground that makes a noise like that, and our imitation of it is the betrayal of the profound misery of our souls.

There is atheism too — not so much among the simple, uneducated souls whose consciences and minds are still normal, but among the intelligentsia for whom atheism is a veneer of a bad conscience, a hatred of the Divine, born not of reason but of contempt for virtue, loyalty, temperance, and law.

What are we going to do about it? One thing, admit our guilt — *our* guilt, all of us, Americans as well as Europeans, for we, too, have let God slip from our grasp. Our greatest enemy is *not* outside our shores; it is not even in our saboteurs, secret agents, and Fifth Columnists; it is in our souls — the forgetfulness of our brotherhood in God. There are too many divisions and classes among us in America now; *too many hates,* too few deep loves; too much tolerance based on expediency and not enough tolerance grounded in charity; too much tolerance of evil and not enough intolerance of injustice. Where are we going to find the basis of our unity? We will find the secret in the

humblest coin of our realm. So many have been interested in seeking dollars that they have quite forgotten the wisdom that is written on the penny. Take a penny into your hand: on one side you will find written the words *E pluribus unum:* "we who are many are one." If you want to find out how the many are made one turn the penny over, and you will find the answer: *"In God we trust."*

There can be differences in our national life without animosity, varying lights of conscience without bitterness, provided we have a really good reason for loving one another. And the only good reason for loving everyone, whomsoever he be, even though he be our enemy, is *because he is a creature of God redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* One day a doctor of the law, tempting Him, asked: "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like unto this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."[6]

[6] Matt. 22:37.

* *II* *

War and the Shattering of Illusions

NOTHING IN ALL THE WORLD IS AS RELENTLESS IN UNMASKING a false way of life as war. It strips men and institutions bare and exposes them in their naked reality. It is easy to believe in any theory until it is subjected to the acid test of experience. Just as some children will not accept their mother's caution that they must not eat too many bananas, but learn the lesson the hard way by becoming so sick that they can never look at a banana again; so, too, the world has tasted the bitter dregs of its own philosophy, learning by tragedy what it refused to learn by counsel. In a false peace a false philosophy survives; but when war empties its seven vials of wrath upon the world, spurious faiths dissolve and Babels crumble. This World War is doing that very thing. It is shattering our illusions, and principally two of them which have become assumptions of our modern life: First, that man is naturally good and indefinitely progressive; and second, that personal and social perfection is attainable in this world.

There is no one in this country and few in Western Civilization who have not had these false assumptions driven into his mind by the press, by education, by word of mouth, until they became unchallenged dogmas even for those who wanted no dogmas. False prophets a few

years ago were saying that progress is natural and inevitable; that evil and sin are just relics of the fall in evolution; that the wars of the past were but the growing pains of civilization and we would soon grow out of their immaturity; that goodness increases with the years, that evil and error decline; that science, which has gained mastery over nature, will soon master the imperfection of man; that, since we have done so much in our time, we will soon do everything; that evolution takes the place of Providence, science supplants grace; and psychoanalysis eradicates guilt; that the theory of the natural goodness of man enunciated by Rousseau, and which was given a biological kick by Darwin, means that nothing can stop us from getting better and better; that men no longer need God, whom they called a "pious extra," because, our professors told us, God was not a Creator but a creature of man's thinking; that evil, still spoken of by the Catholic Church, is due to ignorance and can be cured by education and improved glands; that the Catholic opposition to divorce as destructive of the family is due to its reactionism and its ignorance of the new social theories; that the Kingdom of God is on earth, and that the primitive man who became civilized man will soon be the superman needing no God, because God is man and man is God; that to be "unmodern" is a greater curse than to be a sinner; that a greater measure of emancipation from authority and discipline will, in the language of Bertrand Russell, produce utopia; that production for use instead of profit will, in the words of Marxists, create a para-

dise where no one will ever crave more than he has, because of the overflowing abundance; that anyone who protests against the fulfillment of history within the domains of space and time is either a Catholic, or an antiprogressive, or both; that freedom means the right to do whatever you please; and that to inculcate in the growing child a sense of right and wrong is to be unprogressive (what modern man could live under the stigma of being called "unprogressive"? The shades of John Dewey would haunt him all his waking nights!); that a League of Nations and peace treaties can produce peace without the Prince of Peace; that universal education can root out the propensity to evil; that history is an uninterrupted progress at the beginning of which were millions of evils, then later only half a million, and in the very near future, according to the major prophet H. G. Wells, there will be *A Brave, New World.*

Then came this war, and almost overnight the smug smile of false optimism was wiped off our faces as the sweet prophets of optimism, such as Wells, now soured into prophets of despair. Even we Americans who went to the last war "to make the world safe for democracy," lived under the illusion that it was the war to end all wars. Our utopianism, born of a sophistication emancipated from religion, crashed on our heads like a hurricane from a clear sky. Progress came to a halt. Liberalism's child became a fierce progeny which it could neither control nor understand.

Our disillusioned prophets of progress are now as use-

less as sundials in the night. A few professors in our universities still talk about progress, but with the same hopeful enthusiasm with which bald-headed men hope that their hair may yet grow again. A few comedians turned propagandists may still repeat the cliches of the nineteenth century about "Science and Progress"; but they are the exceptions — theorists not knowing they are dead because their tombstones have not yet been erected over their graves.

One could almost make a litany of the Dead Sea apples which we hoped would nourish us, but which turned out to be full of dust and ashes. Education failed us as it trained the young to live without telling them the purpose of living. Reason failed us as it became divorced from Eternal Reason, and taught the wrongdoer how to rationalize his evil. (A distinguished professor in a large midwestern university says that there is not a single student in his class who could give a rational justification for democracy. For them democracy's right to exist is its power to enforce itself.) *Science* failed us as its very inventions, which should have ministered to life, are now turned to our destruction. Psychoanalysis failed us as it explained guilt away, and turned patients into neurotics. Evolution failed us as it turned backward and ridiculed us by making us act like beasts, because we said we came from them. Capitalism failed us as it rotted into Communism. Liberalism failed us when it could identify wrong with what was anti-Stalin and right with what was pro-Stalin. And finally, Russia failed the Liberals when the red and brown

barbarians united to crucify Poland between two thieves.

In a word, everything human, everything historical, has collapsed. Self-destruction stalks the earth, either through frustration — for man having lost the purpose of life is vainly seeking what he cannot realize — or else through a union with external forces such as guns and bombs for an attack upon our communal existence.

What Dostoievsky prophesied almost a century ago has now come to pass: "Freedom, free thought, and science will lead them into such straits and will bring them face to face with such marvels and insoluble mysteries, that some of them, fierce and rebellious, will destroy themselves, others, rebellious but weak, will destroy one another, while the rest, weak and unhappy, will crawl fawning to our feet and whine to us."

Dostoievsky was right: Some escape their disillusionment by suicide because, deprived of the purpose of life, they have surrendered the will to live; others escape by hate and violent religious persecution, for they refuse to let others enjoy what they themselves are denied; finally, others surrender their freedom to dictators and exchange God for Caesar.

Now that we are disillusioned, frustrated, and deceived, where are we going to look for hope? Here is the clue! Can you think of any institution which has stubbornly refused to subscribe to the illusion of necessary progress? Can you recall ever having heard any Church ridiculed for being "unprogressive," scorned for being so unscientific as to think that evolution would not make man better,

and so unmodern as to contradict what the world took for granted — and now is once more proven to have been right when the world was wrong?

The modern man despairs because his utopian progress has failed. Not so with the Church! Her insight is far more realistic. Never expecting man to be a god, the Church does not feel that all is lost because he turns out to be just a disillusioned man. The perfections for which man is made are free gifts of God to be received through repentance and faith and forgiveness. Man's despair today is only his proud and impenitent pretension to be independent of God and His love. The Church patiently waited for the drugs of scientific materialism to wear off and for the sellers of those drugs to become more and more discredited. But modern man would not learn. So great is human pride, that the illusions of power without God do not become apparent short of disaster. In this sense, war is a revelation. It has brought man back to earth, to his misery, and to his need of God.

The Church's teaching on man, which is now proved right by the war, is as follows:

First of all, the Church has taught that it simply is not true that man is always going up hill to the Olympian heights where, thanks to science and education and democracy, he will become like unto a god. Man sometimes goes downhill — sometimes like a drunkard reeling and falling unto the abyss. The modern pagans have confused progress with evolution: evolution is automatic and takes place without human control; progress is rational and

therefore man-made under God. Hence, the Church teaches that, simply because there is evolution in the cosmos, it does not follow that man is necessarily progressive.

Furthermore, the Church contends that progress in a straight line is a myth. The only reason pagans can use the term "progress" in speaking of man is because they have changed its meaning. Progress originally meant movement toward a fixed goal, but pagans kept changing both the direction and the goal and still called it progress. They have erroneously assumed that all change is progress. A rotting apple is not a progressive apple; a step forward is not necessarily a progressive step — sometimes we may progress by going backward like a wheel. That is why the Church calls a prolonged examination of conscience of our past failings, a "retreat." We can say an artist is making progress when, by successive touches of his brush, he reproduces the model who is sitting before him. But we would never say an artist made progress in his painting, if every time he looked up he found a different model.

Neither is growth in complexity progress. Because we have more gadgets today does not mean that man is better than his forefathers, any more than because a man today can wear a two pants suit, he is more progressive than his grandfather. True progress is not movement *as movement,* but movement toward a point where we know we can stop; namely, a goal.

The myth of human progress is without validity. Materially and technically we are certainly better off than our ancestors; but have we progressed in peace and happi-

ness? Can we honestly say there has been a *qualitative* advance in social justice, in purity of national morals, in business honesty, and in neighborliness? No one will deny a *quantitative* progress; we have more electrical buttons, more modish bathtubs, faster bombers, and squintless and stoopless radios. But have we made this a happier world? Has there not been a progressive shortening of moral responsibilities, a progressive alienation from the Divine, and a progressive emphasis on material well-being until we have developed, on the one hand, a race of submen living below the level of the human, and on the other, a multitude who quite ingenuously, without any conscious deceit, affirm as good everything they do; who refuse to accept direction from any quarters; who make their lives independent of the heritage of tradition and the comforts of religion; who have become deficient in giving attention to anything outside themselves and their pleasures; who, in a word, have become unteachable, more interested in seeking truth than in finding it, and who, like Herod, inquire from the Magi where the Child is born, but never go.

The Church is not optimistic about history; it has always seen that the final product of history will be anti-Christ, the concentration of diabolical evil in human souls. And the only way out of that horror will be, not a new social order, but the Second Coming of Christ to judge the living and the dead. Every year in the Gospel of the Mass the Church reminds her children that there will be no perfect state in the world, for while good men sow

wheat, evil men sow cockle; and both will be permitted to grow together until the harvest.

Do not the facts bear out the Church's opposition to the myth that man is necessarily progressive without God? Since the world accepted Rousseau's thesis of the natural goodness of man without God, there have been six major wars, and four supreme revolutions. Between the Napoleonic wars and the Franco-Prussian War there intervened fifty-five years; between the Franco-Prussian War and the first World War, forty-three years; between the last World War and this war, twenty-one years. Fifty-five, forty-three, twenty-one — and each succeeding war more destructive than the last, not only of life and property, but of truth, liberty, and belief in God. Do our progressive friends call that "Progress"?

Secondly, just as false as the myth of progress or the indefinite perfectibility of man, is the twin myth of utopianism, that perfection is to be sought here below. Human history cannot produce its own destiny, out of itself by internal combustion. Writers like H. G. Wells who are tirelessly reminding us of the heaven that yet awaits us on earth, are issuing checks on a future so distant, they know they will never be cashed. Always foretelling what supermen our great-great-great-grandchildren are going to be, they forgot to tell us how our grandfather would pay his rent. These pagans confused two entirely different kinds of ends — an ending in time, or a chronological end, and an ending in *purpose,* or a teleological end. A man who dies has an ending in time; a man who

becomes a lawyer has an ending in purpose. The pagans thought that a future in time meant a future in purpose, and that given a million years anything could happen, even a paradise on earth, which is ridiculous. Give a rotten egg ten million years and it would never hatch a drama of Shakespeare. Neither does the future in time give us any guarantee of an earthly paradise here below, because the germs of that paradise are not inherent in the egg on which our civilization is now hatching.

Furthermore, what is to happen to the persons living now, each of whom has an individual worth, with his own specific problem of happiness. Is the blessedness of the future on earth to be attained at the sacrifice of us who live now? Are we to be as so many old sticks thrown into the bonfires lit by the pagans of progress to keep the flames burning for a future generation to warm its hands? Perfection in time by its very nature excludes a solution to the tragic frustrations of all generations who have already lived and suffered, and who, for no other crime than because they were born out of due time, must be barred by the utopians with their flaming swords from entering into Paradise. All the generations that have gone before are but steppingstones to the blissful race of the elect as yet unborn. Instead of being a philosophy of progress as it claims to be, it invalidates its only progress by a religion of death and extinction. A progress based on the canonization of a future generation is without mercy for either the present or the past, for it admits to its messianic Eden only those unborn generations for whom the present have made

this unrewarded sacrifice. Such a consummation celebrated by the future elect amidst the tombstones of us their ancestors, has all the dubious hilarity of gravediggers amidst a pestilence.

No greater lie was ever enunciated than the lie of Marx, repeated by Lenin and echoed by Stalin: "religion is the opium of the people," for to promise man a heaven if he lived virtuously was to satisfy reason more than to promise him "a pie in the sky," if he lived as a subversive revolutionist. It was all part of the modern agreement not to face the issue of death and hence the destiny of man. They agreed among themselves to forget its reality, its certitude, and as a result begot a race who never asked themselves the most important question in all the world: "What exchange shall a man give for his soul." The modern mind is like a man who refuses to open a letter which he is afraid contains bad news. The Church has told him to open it for years; but now the war has torn it open violently. History repeats the same lesson: man left to his own wisdom, science, and organization is very likely to make a fool of himself.

The writing is on the wall as clearly as in the days of Balthasar. Shall we be blind to it as they were in the days of Noe: "Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, even till that day in which Noe entered into the ark, and they knew not till the flood came, and took them all away."[1] Shall we be as it was in the day of Lot, when "they did eat and drink, they bought and sold, they

[1] Matt. 24:38, 39.

planted and built. And in the day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all."[2]

Shall we go on with our godless education, our shattered family life, our class wars, our political intrigues, and our undisciplined and uncircumcised hearts, because we foolishly believe the only enemy we have is across the sea? In the name of God, let us face the facts: If the human and the historical have broken down, how are we to be saved from our propensity to self-destruction? Obviously only by the intervention of something suprahuman and suprahistorical – something beyond man and beyond history. If man can look nowhere but to himself and to his time-machine, he is doomed to perish. His only hope is in a Power beyond him who can do what he cannot do, and give him a truth which he does not know. Though this Power must be Divine, it must at the same time be human; otherwise how can it be one with us, how can it share our woes and our ills? Though this Power must be beyond time, it must at the same time be *in* time; otherwise how could it solve the problems born of the womb of time? As the physician who heals must be outside the sick man and yet working within the sick through his medicine, so in a much more intimate way must the Divine be one with the human and the Eternal one with the temporal. Such is the central affirmation of our faith that Jesus Christ, who was born at Bethlehem and suffered under Pontius Pilate, is true God and true Man: the in-

[2] Luke 17:28, 29.

troduction from outside and above into history and into the world of fallen sinful man, of the Power and the Wisdom of God. Jesus was not simply an instrument of God, not simply a man with a deeper consciousness of God than others, not simply another prophet like Isaias or Jeremias, wholly on the human side of the abyss, but the very God of very God; for that event which took place in Bethlehem was the interaction of God's love and history's need.

If progress is in a straight line, why are we today "going around in circles"? If man were naturally good, God would never have come to this earth to make man good. If all were right with the world, God would have stayed in His heaven. His Presence on earth is witness not to our progress, but to our needs.

III

Providence and War

A TRUE CHRISTIAN DOES NOT LOOK ON WAR IN THE SAME WAY as one who lives by the spirit of the world. His point of view is different in two respects: first, he has a set of basic principles grounded on the Eternal Law of God by which he judges a given situation or problem, as distinguished from those who change their principles to suit a situation or who are guided solely by emotion; secondly, he believes in a Divine Purpose in history, as distinguished from those who feel that the cosmos is the plaything of chance.

Some who believe in God will go part way with the Christian belief that a beneficent Providence presides over the universe. They would admit this Providence in the trivialities of life and might even quote the words of our Lord, "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns: and your heavenly Father feedeth them."[1] But in practice they forget that the same Divine Providence is even more solicitous for men: "Are not you of much more value then they?" "And if the grass of the field, which is today, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe: how much more you, O ye of little faith."[2] To such people God is behind the

[1] Matt. 6:26.
[2] Matt. 6:30.

beautiful things of life like the song of a bird and the innocence of a lily; but storms and disasters, which even insurance agents call an "act of God," are considered by moderns as outside Providence or even as the defeat of Providence.

This exclusion of Divinity from the darker aspects of life the true believers in God refuse to accept. Precisely because they do believe that God's purposes extend even to the fall of nations and the momentary defeat of the good, they are made the object of reproach if not of ridicule in times of war. As nation rises against nation, and as the innocent suffer, on all sides they are asked: "Where is your God now?"

That question has been asked in mockery in all periods of adversity. Of old, the prophet Joel pictured the Jewish priests, on the one hand, praying to God, and the Gentiles, on the other, sneering at their faith. "Between the porch and the altar, the priests the Lord's ministers shall weep and shall say: Spare, O Lord, spare thy people: and give not thy inheritance to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them. Why should they say among the nations: Where is their God."[3] And before Joel, King David prayed to be saved from the reproach of unbelievers: "Help us, O God, our saviour: and for the glory of thy name, O Lord, deliver us: and forgive us our sins for thy name's sake: Lest they should say among the Gentiles: Where is their God?"[4] "Not to us, O Lord, not to us: but to Thy name

[3] Joel 2:17.
[4] Ps. 78:9, 10.

give glory. For Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake: lest the Gentiles should say: Where is their God?"[5]

The taunts of the Gentiles against the Jews who, in Old Testament times, kept their faith in God amidst chaos and defeat, is re-echoed today by atheists, humanists, pagans, and diluted Christians, who at the return of barbarism and the violation of justice, turn to us and sneer as of old: "Where is your God now?" H. G. Wells is their spokesman as he writes: "If I thought there was an omnipotent God who looked down on battles and deaths and all the waste and horror of this war — able to prevent these things — doing this to amuse himself, I would spit in his empty face."

Those who are of the spirit of Wells, who deny Providence because sins no longer go unpunished, or because the myth of progress has been exploded, ask "If there is a God, why does He permit this war?" I should say, for exactly the same reason God allows us to cut our fingers if we wantonly clutch a razor. Our bleeding fingers are the red witness to our rebellion against the laws of reason, for reason should have told us the razor would cut. Multiply that rebellion against the Divine Reason by millions and you have this war.

But, it may be asked: "Why does God not stop this war?" Who started this war anyway? Why does God not stop our headache when we overdrink? Why does God not suspend us in mid-air if we throw ourselves from the top of the Empire State building? Do we want God to let

[5] Ps. 113:1, 2.

us go on violating His laws, but to stop visiting upon us the consequences of our violations? Do we want God to let us break our promises to love someone until death do us part, but to stop Hitler and Stalin and Mussolini from breaking their promises to live in peace with Albania, Finland, or Austria? Is our government indifferent to the violation of law? Shall we expect God to be indifferent to His laws? We want to put our hand over fire and not be burned. We want to sow cockle and reap wheat. We want men to forget the Fatherhood of God, and then blame God because they do not act like brothers? If we want to find out who started this war, let us not go to God, but to our consciences, for all nations, in varying degrees, are guilty — all have abandoned God.

As Seneca once told Lucilius: "No wonder there is so much sickness. Look at all the cooks!" In like manner, man may cook up his own evil; this war may well be the broth of our own making, made from the bitter herbs of our alienation from Divinity.

"Well, why does God not work a miracle and stop the war?" It is indeed curious that those who never before believed in a miracle, not even the Resurrection of the Son of God from the dead, now ask for a miracle! Do we who boasted a few years ago of the omnipotence of science, now want our science to be nullified by a miracle destroying all the laws of nature, so that gunpowder will not explode, ships will not sink, bombs will not fall, and cannon will not shoot? Do we who boasted of freedom as the right to do whatever we please, now want God to

take our freedom away by a miracle destroying it? We reproach Stalin and Hitler and Mussolini for destroying personality by uprooting freedom. Do we want God to do the same? That is what He would be doing if He stopped this war in the way we want it stopped. God gave us gas, oil, iron – and now, because these things are used by ungrateful men to destroy one another, we blame God for not miraculously subverting the very uses to which man freely put them. And if the miracle were worked and God stopped this war, what would we do? Go on living as we were before? Would America in gratitude to God break off its relations with anti-God governments like Russia and Germany? Would we in return for the miracle raise our children in the next generation in the love of Him who so preserves us? Would we restore the sanctity of marriage to our national life? The kind of miracle we ask would not save us. Only our conversion to God by prayer and penance can do that – and that would be the real miracle.

"Why does not God punish the Nazis and Fascists and Communists?" This is like the request John made of our Lord, to "Rain down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans." God will not destroy them for two reasons: first, *all* the evil is not in them, and *all* the goodness is not in us – the cockle was not sown on the right side of the field and the wheat on the left, but together; secondly, the final adjustments of Divine Justice take place not in time, but at its end. "Suffer both [the wheat and the cockle] to grow until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest

I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into my barn."[6]

To all who ask "Where is God now?" may I ask: Where are *your gods* now? Where is your god of science? Your god of progress? Your god of man? In them you trusted, but not in the true God of Justice and Mercy. Did you ever think of God before this war started? Did you just begin to think of Him because you wanted someone to blame? Did you, in the days when He blessed you with prosperity, ever thank Him? Did you ever pray to Him? Did you ever acknowledge your dependence on His Sovereign Power? Do you think of Him now only because your heart aches? And do you blame Him now for the heartache that comes naturally because, in better days, you were not clean of heart? But even though you think of God only now He will not reject you: "If you turn to the Lord with all your heart, put away the strange gods from among you . . . He will deliver you . . ."[7]

Finally, you ask: "Why does not the Church do something about the war?" Well, why did we not pay attention to the red light before the auto struck us? Did we accept Leo XIII's warning over fifty years ago, about Liberalism leading to collectivism and socialism? Did we not do everything we could to prevent the Church's influence, and now complain because it is not more influential? Did we not try to keep the Church weak by saying religion

[6] Matt. 13:30.
[7] 1 Kings 7:3.

was for the individual, not for society? Now we blame the Church because it has no control over society. When some say, "Now is the Church's opportunity," they really mean: let the Church clean up the dirty mess which our godless existence has brought us so that we can go back to our godless living once again. This is not the Church's opportunity to do something: It is ours!

The same God who permitted nations to be visited with their iniquities, who suffered others to be invaded for their needful reparation, is still the Lord of the Universe, the King of kings. His wisdom transcends our understanding more than music transcends the sense knowledge of a mouse hidden in a piano. What makes us rise up against God in misfortune is our pride. For the past two decades in our secular education and in our press we have seen the familiar theme: "I cannot accept a God who . . ." At the close of the last war one professor in a commencement address in a well-known theological school gave fourteen points upon which God would be acceptable to a democracy. If this insane blasphemy became generalized we should soon have the wood telling the carpenter the fourteen conditions upon which it would become a door. Would God mean anything if He were our creation? Is a mother a mother if she is born of us? I am not going to expose the fallacy of such pride, except to express a fear that such blasphemy on the part of some of our educators may — if it becomes common in our national life — draw down upon us a humiliation in which God will save us in His way, rather than ours.

Our Declaration of Independence affirms that this country trusts in God. Americans should take this literally.

Admitting that we do not know everything, there is one truth we will never relinquish: an absolute trust in the Providence of God even in adversity, sorrow, depression, catastrophe, and war. With Job we cry out: "Although He should kill me, I will trust in Him; but yet I will reprove my ways in His sight."[8] And like the innocent Tobias who "repined not against God because the evil of blindness had befallen him, but continued immovable in the fear of God, giving thanks to God all the days of his life,"[9] so in these days of war, our trust in God shall be like unto that of our Spiritual Father, Pius XII, who said: "We have left nothing undone that human power could do, and human counsels could suggest, to avert this accumulation of evils. We nonetheless place all our hope in Him who alone is all powerful, who holds the earth in the palm of His hand, who guides the destinies of nations, the thoughts and sentiments of those who will rule nations. We desire, therefore, that all should interweave their prayers with Ours, that the Merciful God by His powerful command may hasten the end of this calamitous storm.[10]

The problem of evil, Father Vincent McNabb tells us, has two solutions: practical and speculative. The practical solution is to trust in Divine Providence spoken of above.

[8] Job 13:15.
[9] Tob. 2:13, 14.
[10] April 15, 1940.

The speculative solution involves the following principles: (1) God who is infinitely good cannot directly will any evil, physical (as disease, pain), or moral (as sin). (2) But physical evils have sometimes effects that are good, e.g., the lancing of a boil. God can indirectly will to bring about good effects through physical evils. If the thief on the right had not suffered on the cross, he might have missed salvation. (3) But these good effects could not be willed by God unless they were better than the physical evils. To cut off a gangrenous leg to save a life is justifiable. Since the soul is worth more than the body, or wealth, or health, it would not be incongruous to permit a physical evil for a good moral effect. No physical good is as great as a moral good. (4) God who can indirectly will a physical evil for the sake of a higher physical or moral good, cannot indirectly will a moral evil (sin) for the sake of any emerging good.

Starting from this basic trust in God, certain conclusions follow:

We will not start with the assumption that we are innocent, and therefore assert that all our misfortune is undeserved.

Henceforth, instead of asking, "On whose side is God?" we shall look into our own souls and say: "On whose side are we?"

We shall constantly keep before our minds that the greatest tragedy of war is not economic loss or physical suffering, but acquiescence in evil: "And fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul: but

rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body in hell."[11]

The unbeliever can explain the tormenter in war, but he cannot explain the sacrifice of the soldier or the martyr. The believer in God can explain both. Suffering in all forms is, for the Christian, a mystery, not a problem. To get a square peg into a round hole is a problem because one fact does not fit the other fact. Suffering is not like that. It fulfills a mysterious purpose; even sin may be a "happy fault" if it brings Redemption.

Given the spectacle of the Son of God Incarnate stretched on the cross through the corporate evil of men, and yet conquering their hate and sin by rising to a new life and pouring out forgiveness and pardon — given that vision on Calvary, suffering and war and evil can be faced without losing hope either in humanity or in God. It was the prosperous Solomon who complained of the emptiness of life, not the suffering Job. The Cross could once more marry us to God.

America must return to God humbly and penitently, for if we continue to forsake God, God will forsake us. He is not only the God of Mercy, but the God of Justice, and though He suffers some to sneer, "Where is your God now?" He in His turn will answer, "Where are their gods, in whom they trusted . . . let them arise and help you."[12]

[11] Matt. 10:28.
[12] Deut. 32:37, 38.

IV

Conditions of a Just War

THE TRAGEDY OF OUR DAY IS THAT SO MANY MINDS ARE CONfronted with problems, unexpected tragedies, or catastrophies, for which they have no principle of solution. The Christian is never in that quandary because he has his philosophy of life and hierarchy of values made before a difficulty presents itself. The difference between the modern pagan and the true Christian is, that the former is confronted with strange roads without guideposts, whereas the Christian has a map to cover all the roads; the pagan has need of measuring something but has no measuring rod, the Christian has his standard of values already made before the valuable is presented for appraisal. The Christian is like a carpenter who carries his rule in his pocket — he does not know whether he will have to measure floors, ceilings, doghouses, palaces, movie theaters, or churches; but regardless of whether he has to stand or stoop, he never throws away his ruler, never decides to be a Liberal and makes the foot measure 13 inches, or a reactionary and make it measure 11 inches. A foot, for him, is 12 inches despite Progressive education. The modern, on the other hand, uses moral principles like clothes. He uses one set of principles at one moment, another at another, as he

wears white trousers for tennis, formal black for dinner, trunks at the beach, and none at all in his tub. His likes and dislikes determine his moral principles instead of his moral principles determining his likes and dislikes.

This difference between the modern and the Christian is true not only as regards education, economics, politics, science, but even as regards war. The Christian does not wait until war is declared, and then through the influence of propaganda, emotion, or slogan, deride its justice or injustice. He has a body of principles of justice grounded in the Eternal Reason of God, anterior to any conflict. What these principles are in relation to war is the subject of this chapter. In other words, is a war ever justified? The question is so worded as to ignore this war completely. All we want to do now is to set down the invariable Catholic principles for a just war — principles we had before this war, before the Civil War, before the French Revolution, before Lepanto, and before Constantine, and which we will have long after this war.

Our procedure will be to set down in general the determinants of a moral act, and then apply them to war. In every moral act three elements must be considered: first, the object; second, the intention; and third, the circumstances. Not one of these may be contrary to the moral order, if the act is to be considered morally good. To express this idea we often use an old Latin maxim: *bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quocumque defectu;* that is, all the moral determinants of an act must be good: its object, its intention, and its circumstances. If

only *one* of them is not good, the act cannot claim to be wholly good.

To illustrate: Suppose one wants to know whether it is a morally good act to help a poor friend who needs $1,000 to remain in his business. Inquire, first: What is the *object* of the gift? To help a neighbor. Obviously that is good — but that alone does not make the act morally good, for two other points must also be considered.

Second, what is the intention or the motive for the action? The act can be good and the motive bad. If the intention in giving is to relieve the friend's financial burden so he can continue to give himself and family the normal comforts of life, then the act is so far morally good; but if the motive for giving is to win the favor of his wife and ultimately to induce her to divorce him, then the act is vitiated by an evil intention.

Third, one must inquire: What are the circumstances? If the gift is made through the intermediary of a friend of the wife who, in giving the gift ridiculed the sanctity of the marriage bond and justified divorce on the grounds that everyone was doing it, the good act would be further vitiated and spoiled by the unmoral circumstances surrounding the gift.

It cannot be too often repeated that all three elements must be good: the action itself, the intention, and the circumstances. An act must therefore be good not only in its end but in its *means*. That is what the modern pagan forgets: he thinks that because the end is good, he can use any means he pleases. No! The end never

justifies the means. And incidentally, for those who have been deceived by lies, the Jesuits never taught anything else but this traditional Christian doctrine.

Let us now apply these principles to war. To be just, a war must be good in its object, in its intention, and in its circumstances:

1. The *object* must be good; that is, a war must have a just cause. Now, wars are of two kinds, defensive and offensive. A defensive war is just in its cause if it is waged to defend an essential and fundamental right unjustly denied. An offensive war is just in its action if it is the only means for preserving an essential and fundamental right or justice unjustly denied. It is, of course, here presumed that the war is the last resort in the preservation of justice; that *every* other peaceful means of righting the wrong must have been tried, and that the importance of the justice to be defended is proportioned to the gravity of the ills which the war would cause. As Henry of Ghent phrased it in the Middle Ages: "There are two ways of combating: by discussion or by violence; the first being peculiar to man, the second to wild animals, one should only have recourse to the latter when the former is of no avail." War cannot be just on both sides at the same time. Doubtful rights do not give a just cause. Those in authority are under the grave obligation of pondering all reasons, for war is not a political problem, but moral and religious. When doubt exists about a just cause for war, the dispute between States must be settled in another fashion, such as arbitration.

The Christian under no circumstances can accept Stephen Decatur's doctrine: "My country right or wrong." A slogan of this kind assumes there is no law above a nation, not even the law of God – therefore, whatever one's nation decides to do, is right. Rather the Christian attitude is: If our country is wrong, let us make it right; and when it is right, if need be we will die for it; then in dying for it we will be defending our country's justice because it is one with Divine Justice.

2. War must be good or right not only in its object or cause, but also in its *intention.* The only intention which can justify war is to promote common good and avoid evil. The common good here means not exclusively the common good of the individual nation but the common good of the world, because today no nation is hermetically sealed but rather its order and prosperity is bound up inseparably with other nations.

Though a war was declared by lawful authority and for a just cause, it could become unjustified by reason of the wrong intention of the one who waged it; for example, for the sake of civil vengeance, to satisfy the lust of domination, or to create internal discords so as to incite revolution within a country at war. This latter applies to the Communist technique of using even a just war to stir up a civil war.

War is a terrible instrument, the last thing to be resorted to in defense of justice, and to make use of it one requires a pure heart and clean hands. One must therefore never confuse slogans with intentions. Civilization and culture

are not the prizes of battle and hence must not be made the pretext of battle.

3. War, to be justified, must be good not only in its cause, not only in its intention, but also in its *circumstances* or its methods. A bad method could vitiate a good intention; for example, to circulate foul literature to procure money for a maternity ward. The Church is most emphatic about the *circumstances* of war affecting its morality. In 1937, for instance, when the Mexican government was persecuting religion with the fury of the Nazis, there were some evidently who thought that a revolt by force would have been justified. For that reason, in March, 1937, the Holy Father, Pius XI, addressed the following letter to the Mexican Bishops: "The Church condemns every unjust rebellion or act of violence against the properly constituted civil power. . . . Although it is true that a practical solution depends on concrete circumstances, it is nevertheless our duty to remind you of some general principles which must always be kept in mind:

"1. The methods used for vindicating rights are means to an end, or constitute a relative end, not a final or absolute end." For example, a gun is a means; it is not justified because it is shot, but because of the reason for which it is shot. Its morality is relative to something outside itself, for there is a world of difference between a gun used to shoot a fat bear and a gun to shoot a rich uncle.

"2. That, as a means to an end, the methods for vindicating rights must be lawful and not intrinsically evil acts." In other words, the end does not justify the means. No

advantage however great may be gained at the expense of violating a moral law. I may not club a millionaire on the head to get money to buy ambulances for the wounded.

"3. That since the methods for vindicating rights should be means proportionate to the end, they must be used only in so far as they seem to attain that end, in whole or in part, and in such a way that they do not bring greater harm to the community than the harm they were intended to remedy." For example, a bomber is a means to win a war: to use it to bomb hospitals is not proportionate to the winning of war and therefore unjustified. There may be no limit to what men *will* do in war, because *physically* they *can* do anything; but there is a limit to what they *may* do in war, because morally they *ought* not do certain things; for example, they ought not kill prisoners of war, make improper use of a flag of truce, force conquered people and particularly women to march in front of soldiers into battle. The Catholic Church officially believes that aerial bombardments of civilian populations is an unjustified method of war, and *Osservatore Romano* of the Vatican on June 10, 1938, declared that the protests of the world against bombings in Spain were justified by the fact that the centers bombed had no military interest.

When, then, an individual is confronted with the problems of war, he should ask himself these questions: Is the cause for which my country goes to war just? Is it grave and proportionate to the evils which will follow? Is it to defend basic rights, which could not otherwise be

preserved, or to expand possessions, and preserve a certain form of economy or politics? Second, supposing the cause to be just, has my country the right intention? Is it entering the war to save loans made to foreign countries, or loans to restore international order based on justice? Third, are its methods justified? Is it using certain anti-religious forces? Is it so conducting the war that it realizes war is a conflict between States and not between individuals? Are its methods conducive to a true peace without vindictiveness? Only when these three questions of morally good end, right intentions, and justifiable methods can be answered in the affirmative can war be justified. These principles are as independent of propaganda and emotion as the sun is independent of the methods of government. They antedated this war and every war, because the order of the universe is grounded on the justice of God. As a ship can keep its course because its star is fixed, so a Christian can keep his thinking straight and his mind tidy in the midst of a self-interested and distracting world, because his justice is fixed in God and everything else revolves about it. Our concept of justice is as unchanging as the Eternal Spirit of God.

> In the corrupted currents of this world,
> Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
> And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
> Buys out the law: But 'tis not so above:
> There is no shuffling, there the action lies
> In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd
> Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
> To give in evidence. (*Hamlet,* Act III, Scene 3.)

St. Thomas treats two subsidiary questions of war — viz., is it ever permitted to disobey the order of a legitimate superior? He answers: "There are two reasons for which a subject may not be bound to obey his superior in all things. First, on account of the command of a higher power. For as a gloss says on Rom. 13:2, *They that resist* (Vulg. — *He that resisteth*) *the power, resist the ordinance of God* (cf. St. Augustine, *De Verb. Dom.*, viii). *If a commissioner issue an order, are you to comply, if it is contrary to the bidding of the proconsul? Again if the proconsul command one thing and the emperor another, will you hesitate to disregard the former and serve the latter? Therefore, if the emperor commands one thing and God another, you must disregard the former and obey God.* Secondly, a subject is not bound to obey his superior, if the latter command him to do something wherein he is not subject to him. For Seneca says (*De Beneficiis,* iii), *It is wrong to suppose that slavery falls upon the whole man: for the better part of him is excepted. His body is subjected and assigned to his master, but his soul is his own.* Consequently in matters touching the internal movement of the will man is not bound to obey his fellow man, but God alone.

"Nevertheless man is bound to obey his fellow man in things that have to be done externally by means of the body: and yet, since by nature all men are equal he is not bound to obey another man in matters touching the nature of the body, for instance in those relating to the support of his body or the begetting of his children.

Wherefore servants are not bound to obey their masters, nor children their parents, in the question of contracting marriage, or of remaining in the state of virginity, or the like. But in matters concerning the disposal of actions and human affairs, a subject is bound to obey his superior within the sphere of his authority; for instance, a soldier must obey his general in matters relating to war, a servant his master in matters touching the execution of the duties of his service, a son his father in matters relating to the conduct of his life and the care of the household, and so forth."[1]

Next he discusses whether clerics should be asked to combat in war. "Now warlike pursuits are altogether incompatible with the duties of a bishop and a cleric for two reasons. The first reason is a general one because, to wit, warlike pursuits are full of unrest, so that they hinder the mind very much from the contemplation of Divine things, the praise of God, and prayers for the people, which belong to the duties of a cleric. Wherefore just as commercial enterprises are forbidden to clerics, because they unsettle the mind too much, so, too, are warlike pursuits, according to 2 Tim. 2:4: *No man being a soldier to God, entangleth himself with secular business.* The second reason is a special one, because, to wit, all the clerical Orders are directed to the ministry of the altar, on which the Passion of Christ is represented sacramentally, according to 1 Cor. 11:26: *As often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the chalice, you shall show the*

[1] *Summa Theologica*, 2–2ae, q. 104, art. 5.

death of the Lord, until He come. Wherefore it is unbecoming for them to slay or shed blood, and it is more fitting that they should be ready to shed their own blood for Christ, so as to imitate in deed what they portray in their ministry. For this reason, it has been decreed that those who shed blood, even without sin, become irregular. Now no man who has a certain duty to perform, can lawfully do that which renders him unfit for that duty. Wherefore it is altogether unlawful for clerics to fight, because war is directed to the shedding of blood."[2]

"Prelates and clerics may, by the authority of their superiors, take part in wars, not indeed by taking up arms themselves, but by affording spiritual help to those who fight justly, by exhorting and absolving them, and by other like spiritual helps. Thus in the Old Testament (Jos. 6:4) the priests were commanded to sound the sacred trumpets in the battle. It was for this purpose that bishops or clerics were first allowed to go to the front: and it is an abuse of this permission if any of them take up arms."[3]

"Now, among the faithful, carnal wars should be considered as having for their end Divine spiritual good to which clerics are deputed. Wherefore, it is the duty of clerics to dispose and counsel other men to engage in just wars. For they are forbidden to take up arms, not as though it were a sin, but because such an occupation is unbecoming their personality."[4]

[2] *Summa Theologica*, 2–2ae, q. 40, art. 2.
[3] *Ibid.*, *ad* 2.
[4] *Ibid.*, *ad* 3.

Two practical considerations follow from this Catholic theology of war: First, we Christians should never talk of war, as the world does, in terms of freedom, but always in terms of justice. One of the greatest disasters that happened to modern civilization was for democracy to inscribe "liberty" on its banners instead of "justice." Because "liberty" was considered the ideal it was not long until some men interpreted it as meaning "freedom from justice"; then when religion and decent government attempted to bring them back to justice, organizing into "freedom groups" they protested that their constitutional and natural rights were being violated. The industrial and social injustice of our era is the tragic aftermath of democracy's overemphasis on freedom as the "right to do whatever you please." No, freedom means the right to do what you *ought,* and *ought* implies law, and law implies justice, and justice implies God. So, too, in war, a nation that fights for freedom divorced from justice has no right to war, because it does not know why it wants to be free, or why it wants anyone else to be free.

The Christian, in opposition to the spirit of the world, should think of war first and primarily in terms of justice. Whenever there is justice there is freedom, but when there is freedom, there is not always justice. There can be freedom without justice — and that is the basic reason why there is war today; men wanting to be free from discipline, and particularly from dependence on the Justice of God.

It is indeed interesting that our Lord never praised those who sought freedom apart from justice. Never did He say:

"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after freedom," but "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after justice,"[5] and "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."[6] Let us, then, in the name of God, stop talking about freedom until we decide why we want to be free; let us, when the world has gone mad with freedom alienated from the law of God, unfurl the flag of justice – then we shall be free: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice and all these things shall be added unto you."[7]

Second, since the God of Justice is the God of Charity it follows that although a war may be justified, one may not enter into it in a spirit of hate. We too often identify what is really a sin against charity with a love of justice. It is precisely against this divorce of justice and charity that the Church cautions us, even in times of war. The condemnation of injustice must not be separated from the plea for charity and prayer – the hatred of enmity from the love of enemy. Justice may demand, in history, physical resistance to an aggressor's physical assault; but charity demands that we pray for his conversion from his onslaught against the morality and justice of God.

As a recent writer in the London *Tablet* expressed it: "Our Lord tells us not to fear those who can kill the body, and afterwards can do no more, but rather to fear him who has the power to send our body and our soul into the fire of hell. An immediate application of these

[5] Matt. 5:6.
[6] Matt. 5:10.
[7] Matt. 6:33.

words to our present situation is that we should not allow our enemy to induce us to fall into sin. It is the supreme issue for us in this war as in everything.

"The sins to which an enemy is most likely to tempt us are these three: sins of intemperance, sins of doubt, and sins of hate. Sins of intemperance, as when men depressed by war seek distraction in corporeal excess. Sins of doubt, as when men begin to question the goodness of God who allows such evil to befall them. And sins of hate, when men deny the enemy their charity.

"The important thing for us in these temporal incidents is to be on the side of Christ and of His charity. It is by no means enough that our cause should be just. For one could fight on the right side in this sense and yet defeat its righteous purpose by admitting a decline of temperance or trust or charity. Even the good things of his temporal life must be carefully handled lest self-deception overtake us; for it is not without profundity that the sacred liturgy teaches us to pray so that we may pass through temporal things as not to lose eternal things. . . .

"It is no figure to call God our Father and we His children. It is indeed the most remarkable letter of the truth, for we are adopted through His Son. That truth works out with the validities of paternity and filiation, including the cross-purposes, if we may say so. Is it likely, for instance, that we as children should know what is best for us? Is it not natural that we should, in the heat of the moment and as children do, see first the hardship and realise the blessing tardily?

"That there is blessing we have no doubt: such inducements as the urgent putting of our souls in the state of grace if need be; the discharge of some long-neglected duty, such as making a will, paying a debt, forgiving an injury; suffering a salutary reduction of one's pride of life; being forced to face in a novel, vivid way the four last things; and being so deprived on every side that we are compelled to look to the one thing left to us, the saving of our souls. It may even be that God sends these abrupt blessings for very serious reasons, as when Catholics have grown complacent intellectually and deteriorated morally, and need to be aroused to their true business of salvation by severe awakening. *Hora iam est nos de somno surgere.*"[8]

[8] London *Tablet,* August 3, 1940, pp. 97, 98.

V

Militarism and Pacifism

IF THERE ARE MORAL CONDITIONS WHICH ON BEING FULfilled justify war, then the attitude to militarism or pacifism is altered. In this chapter we are concerned with two extreme attitudes toward war: extreme militarism and extreme pacifism. By extreme militarism we understand that policy which glorifies war as a lawful end in itself; by extreme pacifism we understand that attitude which denies to war the quality of ever being a lawful means. For the first, peace exists only to prepare for war; for the second, peace is desirable at all costs even that of grave injustice which could be remedied by armed resistance.

The traditional Christian position avoids both extremes. The Church does not condemn war absolutely, nor does it ever praise war; but it does admit the conditions which might justify war. The Church does not condemn war absolutely because the State which does not protect the rights of those committed to its care sins. To renounce our own rights is one thing, to renounce someone else's rights is quite different – it may be very wrong. On the other hand, the Church does not praise war, for peace is the principle and the end of both the person and society; and war, like a serious operation, can be resorted to only after all lesser remedies of arbitration have failed.

Then when war is declared, force may be *used* but never abused, to restore justice. Thus the Church rejects both that extreme militarism which parades itself as patriotism, and that extreme pacifism which masquerades as Christianity.

MILITARISM

1. The Church is opposed to extreme militarism because militarism is atheistic. Atheism and militarism go together like pride and selfishness, or injustice and stealing. If there be no God, and if this world is all, then why not get all you can, even by force; or if there is no right rooted in God, then might makes right. That is why the extreme militarist always appeals to the materialistic law of "the struggle for existence": and assuming that man is only an animal, he concludes that only those nations will survive which, animal-like, make themselves more powerful than their neighbors. The normal condition of such a nation is always one of war, either actual or intended. Every atheist government in the world today, therefore, uses politics as a form of war; they employ war-like methods when they *can,* and peaceful methods when they *must.* Instead of war being an instrument of government, government becomes an instrument of war.

The Church clearly sees this close relationship between extreme militarism and atheists; the world does not — not even democratic governments. That is why the world is more likely to be fooled by the "Popular Fronts" and "friendly relations" of these atheistic regimes; it falsely

believes their atheism is distinct from their hidden militarism. We know better; we know that when they take refuge under liberal and democratic or labor skirts they do so to destroy.

2. The Church opposes extreme militarism because it ignores the unity of mankind as creatures of God, issuing from a common root destined for a common fruit. The differences and variations between men in their social relations and their governments and customs, were intended by God to stimulate healthy rivalry, not to be the occasion of ill will and war; for how could God who made us one on earth, and who willed that through virtue we be one with Him in heaven, have placed us under the militarist necessity of hating and destroying one another. To make war the instrument of uniting all men as proletariats, or all men as Aryans, is to destroy the freedom of man who may not want to be a proletariat but may want to be a capitalist like Stalin, or may not want to be an Aryan, but an American.

3. The Church is opposed to extreme militarism because society is for man, not man for society. War is for man, not man for war. Having an intrinsic value as a creature of God, man may not be used as a stick to be thrown into the bonfires of war to warm the hands of the Army.

Catholic theologians are therefore unanimous in declaring that war can be resorted to only after all other means have been exhausted to repair or preserve an essential right. The Church teaches that difference of religion is no reason for war; that spreading religion by force is no

reason for war; the extension of empire for the personal glory of a ruler, is no reason for war. That is why the Church, when America was discovered, condemned the Spaniards who declared that since the Indians were infidels and savages, they could be deprived of their property by force. The Church declared that neither of these reasons justified violence against the Indians. The only just reason that the Spaniards might have for waging war against the Indians, in the eyes of the Church would be the brutal and unjustifiable refusal of the Indians to accord the basic human rights of living in society with one another.

Nor does the argument that war develops military virtues in a nation meet the difficulty, because the value of these virtues lies not in their setting of blood and iron, but in themselves. It is sheer nonsense to say that the only place we can hope to find heroism, obedience, bravery, and courage is in a slaughterhouse. Furthermore, no nation which ever drew the sword as an end in itself was ever able to put it back in its scabbard. An instrument used casually to destroy life cannot preserve life and minister to its comforts, for the "one thing you cannot do with bayonets is to sit on them." A ruler who has waded through blood to sit upon his throne cannot expect that throne to be preserved bloodlessly. As God said to blood-guilty David: "Thou shalt not build a house to my name; because thou art a man of war, and hast shed blood."[1]

[1] 1 Par. 28:3.

PACIFISM

The Church also opposes pacifism for these reasons:

1. The Church does not teach that war is absolutely and intrinsically evil, for it asserts that no natural human right is so fundamental as that of self-defense; hence, the preservation of that right even by force cannot be called an evil.

Since self-defense is permissible for the individual, it is permissible for the State. If the arm has a right to protect the body against a blow, so, too, the arms of the State have a right to use force in the interests of the common good of the body politic.

If nonresistance to moral evil were always right, as the extreme pacifists say, then we should open our prison doors, empty our courts of judges, and sentence to death the man who in the legitimate defense of his own life defended it by force. Then the Supreme Judge on the Last Day should Himself be judged and condemned for saying to the wicked: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." If all the tyrants, and puppet gods who call themselves Caesars can ravage the innocent with impunity and violate righteous nations without their ever having a right to defend themselves, then the world would be worse than it is today, and peace could never be attained. When all the conditions for a just war exist, then those in authority in any nation, charged with the lives and institutions of persons in society committed to their care, may resort to force without violating the moral law.

2. The extreme pacifists have a new argument today.

Since the methods of modern warfare are so terrible, and result in such carnage and destruction, they outweigh any possible good to be obtained by war. This argument makes the morality of war hinge entirely on its *methods,* while completely ignoring its *cause* or its *intention.* There is no doubt that the methods of modern warfare are often immoral, and always murderous. But the proper conclusion is: since such inevitable evils so often follow, the champions of right must exhaust all peaceful means before taking up arms. But the problem still remains: When one nation resorts to such evil methods from an evil intention, must a nation so attacked make no defense? Certainly, a refusal to allow right the assistance of force under any circumstance simply allows might to take precedence over right and delivers up humanity to far more serious moral disorders than any physical destruction resulting from war. "And fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body in hell."[2]

The pacifist thinks that the alternative to war is peace; it is not. Sometimes the alternative is oppression. Sometimes certain God-given rights and liberties can be preserved only by resistance to that which would destroy them. And to defend certain basic God-given rights and liberties is not immoral but righteous.

3. The pacifist generally quotes Scripture and argues as follows: "The Bible says: 'He that taketh the sword

[2] Matt. 10:28.

shall perish by the sword; and if anyone strike you on the right cheek turn also the left.' Now, since the Gospel of Christ is not hate but love, it follows that for a Christian, war is intrinsically evil."

While the pacifist must be commended for his love of Scripture, he must at the same time keep in mind the following facts:

a) An equally strong argument could be drawn up for war in Sacred Scripture, when for example: Abraham was blessed after he "returned from the slaughter of Chodorlahomor,"[3] or the words of Christ, "Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth: I am come not to send peace but the sword."[4]

b) The pacifist forgets that the Bible is no more self-interpreting than the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution of the United States. One can prove anything from the Bible by choosing texts, e.g., "Judas went and hanged himself. . . . Go thou and do likewise." One can prove anything from the Declaration of Independence: The Declaration of Independence states that liberty is an inalienable right given to me by God. I, therefore, can drive through a red light whenever I please and, if the law arrests me, it is depriving me of a God-given constitutional right. Self-interpretation forgets that just as there is a Supreme Court behind the Constitution to interpret it, so there is a Church behind the Bible to interpret it. That is why whenever Catholics want to find out what

[3] Gen. 14:17–19.
[4] Matt. 10:34.

the Bible means they go to the Supreme Court of the Church. This not only logically prevents misconstruing texts, as St. Peter says, to "our own destruction," but it is historically sound. The Church was already established and functioned throughout most of the Roman Empire at least 20 years before a single book of the New Testament was written. The Church pre-existed the Bible; it was from the bosom of the Christian community that it was written, just as it was from the womb of America that the Constitution was born. A board of editors antedated the *Encyclopaedia Britannica:* a board of editors antedated the Scriptures, for the Bible is not a book, but a collection of books. Hence the problem: Who gathered them together? Why do they begin where they do? Why do they leave off where they do? To answer these questions is to be more fundamental than Fundamentalism. What so many forget is that if there had been no Church there would be no Bible.

The Church reminds the pacifist of two important distinctions which he forgets in quoting Scripture.

(1) The distinction between *personal* duties and *State* duties. The Sermon on the Mount presents us with a standard *personal* conduct, and if everyone followed it, there would be no war. But man is not only an individual; he is also a member of society or a citizen. Now, charity urges us to acquiesce without murmuring at personal wrongs which we suffer; but it does not in any way dispense the State from its very definite duty of defending the interests and rights of the community from unjust

attacks. Charity is the perfection of justice, and not vice versa.

Furthermore, what is lawful for the person is not always permissible for the community. Not every man need be employed by the government or vote, but no society can exist without government. Not every man or every woman need marry, but society cannot exist without marriage. In like manner, an individual can practice nonresistance to physical evil without endangering the life of society. That is why the law recognizes conscientious objectors, but society could not exist without legitimate defense when attacked unjustly. As St. Thomas so clearly puts it — "Not to resist evil may be understood in two ways. First, in the sense of forgiving the wrong done to oneself, and thus it may pertain to perfection, when it is expedient to act thus for the spiritual welfare of others. Secondly, in the sense of tolerating patiently the wrongs done to others: and this pertains to imperfection, or even to vice, if one be able to resist the wrongdoer in a becoming manner. Hence, Ambrose says (*De Offic.* i, 27): *The courage whereby a man in battle defends his country against barbarians, or protects the weak at home, or his friends against robbers is full of justice:* even so our Lord says in the passage quoted . . . *thy goods, ask them not again.* If, however, a man were not to demand the return of that which belongs to another, he would sin if it were his business to do so: for it is praiseworthy to give away one's own, but not another's property. And much less should the things of God be neglected, for as Chrysostom

says in commenting on St. Matthew, *it is most wicked to overlook the wrongs done to God.*[5]

To escape the force of this argument the pacifists argue that our enemies are not conscious that they are doing evil! Neither, of course, are beasts or maniacs, but I have seen a pacifist hit a mad dog.

(2) The pacifist, in quoting Scripture, forgets the second distinction between the perfect and more perfect. Although the same principles of morality bind both the individual and the State, they are not called to the same perfection — because they have not the same destiny. Consequently their respective rights and duties vary. There are some rights from which an individual can dispense himself, but from which society cannot dispense. The State cannot turn its other cheek to an unjust aggressor, for by so doing it would fail in its God-given duty to secure the rights and justice of the community entrusted to its keeping — but a person can, and should turn the other cheek to his enemy.

In Christ we live by Love; in the State we live by Law. The Church is a supernatural society governed by charity; the State is a natural society governed by justice. But in the present state of affairs no individual citizen or State is beyond the possibility of injustice. The State, therefore, must have the right by natural law to repel unjust attacks by another State, otherwise God would have imposed upon it the necessity of defending justice without the possibility of defense, which would be a contradiction. The closer one

[5] *Summa Theologica*, 2–2ae, q. 188, art. 3, *ad* 1.

is to Christ, the greater the obligation of charity. For this reason the Canon Law of the Church forbids clerics to shed blood.

The Church's position is thus midway between those militants who make war the *end* of a nation, and those pacifists who deny it even as a legitimate *means* of self-defense.

The two extremes of all war and no war do not exhaust the possibilities of reason, as the philosophy of all pleasure and the philosophy of no pleasure do not exhaust the possibilities of life. One can be religious without being a pacifist as one can be patriotic without being a militarist. War to the Church is always a physical evil because it results in the destruction of life and property; but it is not always a moral evil, for the defense of essential rights and justice is not an evil. The principle of passive resistance is permissible in the case of physical evil, but it is not permissible in the case of moral evil. When you blaspheme and strike me I can turn my other cheek, but I may not be so indifferent to your blasphemy. Those who wage a just war are therefore not enemies of peace, for as St. Thomas tells us "those who wage war justly aim at peace, so they are not opposed to peace, except that evil peace which our Lord came not to send upon earth." Force is the servant of justice, not justice the servant of force.

Hate and love are not incompatible, neither is love of peace and war. Hate and love would be incompatible if they were directed to the same object: a boy cannot love

spinach and hate it simultaneously. But love and hate can cease to be incompatible if their objects are different: e.g., I can love the Communist, feed his hungry children, pay his rent, give him my seat in a subway. But I hate Communism; it is intrinsically wicked. In other words, love the sinner, hate his sin; to hate persons is a sin, and in this sense "hatred is murder"; but to hate injustice is not evil, but a sign that we love goodness. In fact, to remain passive in the face of moral evil is to become an accomplice in the crime. As St. Paul told the Romans: "Who do such things are worthy of death; and not only they that do them, but they also that consent to them that do them."[6] As St. Augustine so strongly put it: "It is a good thing to be vanquished if thereby one lose the possibility of doing evil."[7] The world today never makes the distinction between hatred of a wrong and hatred of a person. It hates persons not wrongs. When, therefore, it finds the same wrong in another person it loves it. The wrong in Hitler it hates; the same wrong in Stalin it loves.

Such are the principles. Now for a word of application. Should we go to war? Yes! War against certain persons? No! A physical war? No! A moral war! Yes! War against what? Against the five evils that make war, here and abroad. In the language of the Vicar of Christ, Pius XII, the five triumphs we must strive for are:

1. Triumph over hate, which is today a cause of division

[6] Rom. 1:32.
[7] Ap. 138 *ad Marcellinum.*

among peoples; renunciation, therefore, of the systems and practices from which hate constantly receives added nourishment.

2. Triumph over mistrust, which bears down as a depressing weight on international law and renders impossible the realization of any sincere agreement.

3. Triumph over the distressing principles that utility is a basis of law and right and that might makes right: a principle which makes all international relations unstable.

4. Triumph over those germs of conflict which consist in two-sided differences in the field of world economy; hence progressive action, balanced by corresponding degrees to arrive at arrangements which would give to every State the medium necessary for insuring the proper standard of living for its own citizens of every rank.

5. Triumph over the spirit of cold egoism which, fearless in its might, easily leads to violation not only of the honor and sovereignty of States but of the righteous, wholesome, and disciplined liberty of citizens as well.

It must be supplanted by sincere juridical and economic solidarity, fraternal collaboration in accordance with the precepts of Divine Law among peoples assured of their autonomy and independence.

So long as the rumble of armaments continues in the stark reality of this war it is scarcely possible to expect any definite acts in the direction of the restoration of morally, juridically imprescriptible rights.

If we fought for these five victories we could begin by being true militarists, and end by being true pacifists. God hates peace in those that are destined for war! And we are destined for war — war for justice, war for charity, war not against an external enemy, but first against an

internal enemy against hate, infidelity, expediency, economic injustice, and egoism in the battlefields of our soul! Take up the sword – not the one that thrust outward to kill the neighbor, but the sword that runs inward to the sin of our own hearts. Militarists, we will be fighting against the beam in our own eyes, not the mote in our neighbor's; pacifists we will be, striving for that peace which not the world but the Spirit alone can give; not a defensive war alone against the enemy from without, but an offensive war against the enemy from within, and by it we shall all be transformed into *militia Christi* – "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty to God unto the pulling down of fortifications, destroying counsels and every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringeth into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ."[8] And as St. Paul delivered a message to the citizens of the war-stricken Ephesus in an age when the gleam of military virtues could still captivate the eye, so may we, quoting Paul, turn all that glorious chain of war metaphors into the ethereal glory and nobility of the Christian life and learn how to be militarists for peace: "Put ye on the armor of God that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil, for our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places.

[8] Cor. 10:35.

"Therefore take unto you the armor of God, that you may be able to resist the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth and having on the breastplate of justice, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. In all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit (which is the word of God). . . . Peace be to the brethren and charity which come forth from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."[9]

[9] Eph. 6:11–17, 23.

VI

What Are We Fighting For?

WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR? WHEN I SAY "WE" I MEAN Americans; by "fighting for" I mean the purposes and motives involved either in our sympathies or in our assistance.

What we are fighting for depends on what we are living for. Men fight not because they hate, but principally because they love. Now there are three fundamental loves: men may love the material, the economic, or what are generally called possessions; men may love human rights, liberties, order, and justice; and finally, men may love God.

Hence there are three reasons why men may fight; that is, because they love the economic, or because they love the human, or because they love the divine.

It follows that there are three kinds of wars: horizontal, vertical, and crucial. If we are fighting to preserve the economic, then we are fighting a horizontal war, that is, a war on a two-dimensional plane of length and breadth — a war either for the extension or retention of territory. If we are fighting to preserve the human, then we are fighting a vertical war, that is, a war of three dimensions, which seeks to preserve not only the length and breadth of the material but also the height of ideals.

If we are fighting to preserve the divine, then we are fighting a crucial war, for the word *crucial* is derived from *crux* or *cross,* and the cross has four dimensions: the "breadth, and length, and height, and depth"[1] of Christ's redeeming love on the cross. The battle cry of a horizontal war is generally "Freedom," the battle cry of a vertical war is generally "Justice," the battle cry of a crucial war is "God."

Are we fighting a *horizontal* war?

We are fighting a horizontal war if we are fighting solely to preserve the conditions of a peace treaty born of revenge: "woe to the conqueror," which is nothing but "injustice under the cloak of justice."[2]

We are fighting a horizontal war if we are fighting to preserve that particular form of Capitalism and credit in which, in the words of Pius XI, "not alone is wealth accumulated, but immense power and despotic economic domination is concentrated in the hands of a few," resulting in a situation which "divides men on the labor market into two classes, as into two camps . . . and transforms this labor market into an arena where the two armies are engaged in combat."[3]

We are fighting a horizontal war if we are fighting to preserve that particular form of Liberalism which declares, in the words of Leo XIII, "that each is free to think on any subject as he may choose and to do whatever he may like to do . . . that the judgment of each one's conscience is independent of all law . . . that the collective reason

[1] Eph. 3:18. [2] *Summi Pontificatus.* [3] *Quadragesimo Anno.*

of the community should be the supreme guide in the management of all public affairs; and that all right and all duty reside in the majority."[4]

We are fighting a horizontal war if we are fighting to preserve the present social order based on the morality of pragmatism which denies the "universal norm of morality as well for individual and social life as for international relations," and which results in "levity in entering into marriage, divorce, the breakup of the family, the cooling of mutual affection between parents and children, birth control, the enfeeblement of the race, the weakening of respect for authority, or obsequiousness, or rebellion, neglect of duty toward one's country and toward mankind."[5]

If we are fighting to preserve these things, then we are fighting a horizontal war, or an unjust war, for such a war fails to fulfill the first condition of a just war, namely the vindication or preservation of an essential right. Instead of being essential to democracy, these things are obstacles to it. Because they are not worth living for, they are not worth fighting for. They are even difficult to live *with*. If we are fighting to preserve these errors because we live with them, then our cause is as vain as that struggle Shakespeare described:

> The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
> That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
> Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot

[4] *Libertas Praestantissimum.*
[5] *Summi Pontificatus* and *Sertum Laetitiae.*

> Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
> Which is not tomb enough and continent
> To hide the slain. (*Hamlet.*)

Are we fighting a *vertical* war, that is, a war for human rights, justice, and true liberty?

In order to fight this kind of war, two conditions must be fulfilled in the present state of the world: Some loss of the economic and a rebirth of justice. In other periods in history the first of these conditions would not be necessary, because at other times men had a greater awareness of God. But today love of the economic has so blinded men to the spiritual, that like the Prodigal they must be disillusioned before coming to the knowledge of Truth.

Suppose a wealthy man keeps all his negotiable securities in his house; suppose further he lives for the economic, thinks, sleeps, and eats his business, is conscious of no other obligation in life except to make money. His house catches fire and he loses everything wherein he trusted. But after a week of reflection he suddenly makes the startling admission: "Well, thank God I have my wife and children." He never knew he had them before. Disaster lifted him to a new set of values. He lost the economic, but he found the human. He had to die in order to be reborn.

Like a mighty oak, wealth has grown until it has shut off all sunlight and air from the flowers and grass which are also creatures of God. A storm can level the oak without uprooting the grass or the violet. Modern man must first have his trust in wealth smashed before he will hope

in justice: "And I said: How long, O Lord? And he said: Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land shall be left desolate."[6] The war is doing that very thing. It is smashing our illusions of human progress, the omnipotence of science, the self-sufficiency of the profit-motive. It has dropped the scales from our eyes that we may see; it has purged the outer envelope of the grain of wheat that it may grow; it has made the so-called wise insecure in their security. Indeed we are now

> A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows;
> Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
> Am pregnant to good pity. (*King Lear.*)

But we are not fighting a vertical war merely because misfortune befalls us; the second and more important condition must yet be fulfilled, namely, a rebirth of the virtue of justice. At this stage a man talks less about freedom and more about justice, less about totalitarianism and more about righteousness.

Up until now the world has said: "There is no right and wrong; no good and evil; they are medieval hang-overs from Catholicism. Good and evil are relative to a point of view. Has not Einstein proved that everything is relative?"

But these very people who denied evil a few years ago are now pointing their finger across the water and saying: "These dictators are evil; they are wrong." But may we ask: "If they are wrong, then what is right? If they are evil,

[6] Isa. 6:11.

then what is good?" As some men come to appreciate the blessings of health only after a long illness, so, too, they come to know good by experience with the devil. It was not a preservation of their baptismal innocence but a trial of their own philosophy which awakened them to justice.

If we are fighting to preserve, not the Economic Man of Capitalism, nor the Psychological Man of Freud, nor the Beast Man of Darwin, nor the Class Man of Marx, but the Good Man ordered to Justice, then we are moving in the realm of the truly human. Any nation which can say in its conscience it is fighting to preserve these five basic principles of justice is fighting a vertical war:

1. To assure all nations great and small, powerful or weak, their right to life and independence.

2. To release nations from the slavery imposed upon them by the race for armaments.

3. To erect some juridical institution which shall guarantee the loyal and faithful fulfillment of the treaties.

4. To establish strictly legal rights for the real needs and just demands of nations, populations, and racial minorities.

5. To restore deep and keen responsibilities which measure and weigh human statutes according to the sacred and inviolable standards of the laws of God.

If any nation can say that in the spirit of justice it is fighting to attain these five objectives, then it is fighting a vertical war.

Finally, are we fighting a *crucial* war, that is, a crusade for God and for Christianity? I know the slogan is often

evoked, but we are not concerned with slogans but truth. Are we fighting to save Christianity? No!

How can we be fighting for Christianity when we are not living for Christianity? To call Hitler anti-Christ does not mean we are for Christ. If at least 60 per cent of the parents of the United States do not care enough about God to give their children a religious education, would they fight to defend the rights of God? If 60 per cent of Americans consider religion no more essential for their own peace of soul and the moral conduct of their children than a game of golf, would they be ready to die for religion any more than they die for golf? Men only fight for what they love.

How can we be said to be fighting God's cause when we call that nation which has driven religion from its borders, murdered millions, and officially proclaimed atheism, a "friendly nation"? I mean Russia. How can we say we are fighting to preserve liberty, justice, and democracy, while embracing in friendly gesture that tyranny which has snuffed out the liberties of millions of people?

How can we be fighting a crusade when we pick and choose among our barbarians like comedians who poke fun at Hitler and Mussolini but are silent about Stalin? Justice demands the condemnation of evil irrespective of where one finds it. Let us not forget, when talking of the plight of Poland, Belgium, Holland, and Norway, pillaged by Germany, to think of Finland, ravaged by Russia, and Greece, attacked by Italy.

Our attitude toward Russia reminds us of a woman

who in dying was asked by the priest to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil. She seemed to have no objection to renouncing the world and the flesh, but firmly refused to include the devil in her imprecations. Asked by the priest to explain her extraordinary reluctance, she said: "Well, I know I am going to die, but I don't know where I am going. I want to be on the safe side — so I don't want to make any enemies — not even the devil."

That is America! We are ready to condemn the world of Hitler, the flesh of Mussolini, but not the devil of Stalin. Mark these words: The enemy of the world in the near future is going to be Communism, which is using peace when it can and war when it must, and is preparing, when Europe is exhausted from war, to sweep over it like a vulture to tear its flesh. When Russia falls America will be the new seat of Communism.

But though this war is not a crusade to save Christianity, we must admit that a war can be just without being holy; and furthermore, that though for a nation a given war may not be a crusade, it can nevertheless be holy for certain individuals in the nation who regard it as a duty laid on them in order that God's law of righteousness be maintained among men. If the cause of any nation today is just, it is not because it has chosen to defend Christianity, but because Christianity has chosen it. If God did make use of such a nation it would certainly be not on account of its righteousness, but on account of His Goodness.

Many nations would be honest if they said not that they were fighting to preserve Christianity but that they

were forced to defend a nobler cause than they deserved. But though they are not fighting to defend Christianity itself, they may be fighting to preserve those basic liberties which Christianity uses as a natural foundation. A nation which undertakes to right a wrong is providing a rallying point for Christianity.

If, then, this war is not directly a crusade, it is possible to have a crusade on the part of those who still are conscious they have immortal souls by "enlisting all unselfish and greathearted men in an endeavor to lead nations back from the broken cisterns of material and selfish interests to the living fountain of divine justice."

Crusaders of Justice and Charity — to that we are all called, and it is the most noble cause any man or woman can defend. What alarms us most is the decline of brotherly love, tolerance, and good will among our fellow citizens. We hiss in theaters; we denounce those who differ with us personally, we hate persons — all this because we have forgotten we are all creatures of God.

"What are we fighting for?" We are fighting to restore sacrifice, discipline, virtue, and love. Some things are not worth fighting for. Let the leaves of the oak of America fall; let the ephemeral things that die fall to the ground. Let the tree for a while stretch out its naked limbs, bare but living. Our inner life is good and sound, only a few externals are bad. Once they have been swept aside by justice, the hidden buds will come forth at another season, strong in new life — and America shall be what the Founding Fathers said it would be: A nation that trusts in God!

VII

War As a Judgment of God

WE SHOULD JUDGE OURSELVES NOT BY THE WICKEDNESS OF our enemies, but by the Justice of God. So common is it today to use the standard of our enemies as the measure of our goodness, that but few suspect that there might be some other standard of comparison than the pagan, namely, the Christian.

The pagan judges his cause by his neighbor; the Christian, by the Justice of God. The pagan compares himself to his enemy and says: "I am not so bad." The Christian looks to Christ who said: "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect," and trembles at his own unworthiness. The pagan sees himself in a candlelight where it is difficult to discern imperfections; the Christian sees himself in the sunlight where all blemishes are revealed. The pagan says: "I am doing as well as anyone else." The Christian asks: "Am I doing what I ought?" The pagan judges his virtues by the vices from which he abstains; the Christian by whether or not he is doing the will of God.

The near-sighted pagan is absolutely incapable of understanding the deeper issues underlying a war, because he always begins a discussion with the wickedness of Hitler and Mussolini and Stalin — rather of Hitler and Mussolini, for the modern pagan likes Stalin — and immediately

jumps to the conclusion that since they are demons, he is an angel of light. Now, there is no doubting the wickedness of these tyrants, but there is room for doubting a negative standard of goodness. Simply because we are not as sick as a dying cancer patient, it does not follow that we are athletes. Like unto the Pharisee who went to the front of the temple, the pagan says: "I thank Thee that I am not as the rest of men — as this publican." Judged by God's standard it was the publican who knelt in the rear of the temple praying "Be merciful unto me a sinner," who went back to his home justified.

Once we judge ourselves by the justice of God rather than by the hideousness of our enemies, war takes on a different complexion. Now, from such a theological point of view what is this war? *This war is a Judgment of God on the entire world.*

By a Judgment of God is meant the execution of justice on man who is permitted to suffer the consequences of his own sins. "For we know that the Judgment of God is according to Truth. . . . And thinkest thou shalt escape the Judgment of God?"

God chastises nations by war to correct their iniquity, to move them to saving amendment, as a surgeon cuts a living organism to restore it to health. This is a commonplace of spiritual history and one confirmed by the thought in the Mass to be read "in time of war," where we pray to God "who by striking, dost heal us."

The history of Israel is full of the idea of war as an instrument of Divine Judgment for the sins of the chosen

people. The Prophet Jeremias describes the infidelities of the Jews:

For my people have done two evils. They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and have digged to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.[1]

I attended and hearkened; no man speaketh what is good, there is none that doth penance for his sin, saying: What have I done? They are all turned to their own course, as a horse rushing to the battle.

The kite in the air hath known her time: the turtle, and the swallow, and the stork have observed the time of their coming: but my people have not known the judgment of the Lord. . . .

The wise men are confounded, they are dismayed, and taken: for they have cast away the word of the Lord, and there is no wisdom in them.

Therefore will I give their women to strangers, their fields to others for an inheritance: because from the least even to the greatest all follow covetousness: from the prophet even to the priest all deal deceitfully. . . .

They are confounded, because they have committed abomination: yea rather they are not confounded with confusion, and they have not known how to blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall; in the time of their visitation they shall fall, saith the Lord.[2]

The same tone is struck by Isaias:

Woe to the sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a wicked seed, ungracious children: they have forsaken the Lord, they have blasphemed the Holy One of Israel, they are gone away backwards.[3]

[1] Jer. 2:13.
[2] Jer. 8:6–12.
[3] Isa. 1:4.

This Judgment, however, is conditional. Repentance would save them from the visitation of their own iniquities.

Wash yourselves, be clean, take away the evil of your devices from my eyes: cease to do perversely.

Learn to do well: seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge for the fatherless, defend the widow.

And then come, and accuse me, saith the Lord: if your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow; and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool.[4]

But if Israel will not repent and restore itself to law and order from within, then the restoration shall take place from without:

But behold, I will raise up a nation against you, O house of Israel, saith the Lord the God of hosts; and they shall destroy you from the entrance of Emath, even to the torrent of the desert.[5]

The instrument of God's justice will be the King Nabuchodonosor and the Assyrians whom the prophets call the rod and the ax of God.

Woe to the Assyrian, he is the rod and the staff of my anger; and my indignation is in their hands.

I will send him to a deceitful nation, and I will give him a charge against the people of my wrath, to take away the spoils, and to lay hold on the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.[6]

And the Lord hath sent to you all his servants the prophets,

[4] Isa. 1:16–18.
[5] Amos 6:15.
[6] Isa. 10:5, 6.

rising early, and sending, and you have not hearkened, nor inclined your ears to hear,

When he said: Return ye, every one from his evil way, and from your wicked devices, and you shall dwell in the land which the Lord hath given to you, and your fathers for ever and ever.

And go not after strange gods to serve them, and adore them: nor provoke me to wrath by the works of your hands, and I will not afflict you.

And you have not heard me, saith the Lord, that you might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, to your own hurt.

Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts: Because you have not heard my words:

Behold I will send, and take all the kindreds of the north, saith the Lord, and Nabuchodonosor the king of Babylon my servant: and I will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all the nations that are round about it: and I will destroy them, and make them an astonishment and a hissing, and perpetual desolations.[7]

For thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will bring against Tyre Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon, the king of kings from the north, with horses, and chariots and horsemen, and companies, and much people. . . .

With the hoofs of his horses he shall tread down all thy streets: thy people he shall kill with the sword, and thy famous statues shall fall to the ground.

They shall waste thy riches, they shall make a spoil of thy merchandise: and they shall destroy thy walls, and pull down thy fine houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber, and thy dust in the midst of the waters.[8]

[7] Jer. 25:4–9.
[8] Ezech. 26:7–12.

But because Assyria is the rod and ax of God's justice, it must not glory in itself and think its victory was due solely to its arms.

Shall the axe boast itself against him that cutteth it? or shall the saw exalt itself against him by whom it is drawn? as if a rod should lift itself up against him that lifteth it up, and a staff exalt itself, which is but wood.[9]

As Jeremias prophesied the "nation shall be made a perpetual desolation." The proud Assyria and Babylon shall be punished, and its fall be likened to Lucifer:

Behold I come against thee, thou destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which corruptest the whole earth: and I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and will roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain.[10]

One running post shall meet another, and messenger shall meet messenger: to tell the king of Babylon that his city is taken from one end to the other.[11]

Thus saith the Lord of hosts: That broad wall of Babylon shall be utterly broken down, and her high gates shall be burnt with fire, and the labours of the people shall come to nothing, and of the nations shall go to the fire, and shall perish.[12]

When the 70 years of captivity shall have been finished, the Medes and Persians shall be the instrument for destroying Babylon:

Behold I will stir up the Medes against them, who shall not seek silver, nor desire gold:

[9] Isa. 10:15.
[10] Jer. 51:25.
[11] Jer. 51:31.
[12] Jer. 51:58.

But with their arrows they shall kill the children, and shall have no pity upon the sucklings of the womb, and their eye shall not spare their sons.

And that Babylon, glorious among kingdoms, the famous pride of the Chaldeans, shall be even as the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrha.

It shall no more be inhabited for ever, and it shall not be founded unto generation and generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch his tents there, nor shall shepherds rest there.

But wild beasts shall rest there, and their houses shall be filled with serpents, and ostriches shall dwell there, and the hairy ones shall dance there:

And owls shall answer one another there, in the houses thereof, and sirens in the temples of pleasure.[13]

Nor even the sorcerers and the astrologists of Babylon shall be able to save it from destruction — the nation that prided itself as the "lady of the kingdoms":

Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called the lady of kingdoms.

I was angry with my people, I have polluted my inheritance, and have given them into thy hand; thou hast shewn no mercy to them: upon the ancient thou hast laid thy yoke exceeding heavy.

And thou hast said: I shall be a lady for ever: thou hast not laid these things to thy heart, neither hast thou remembered thy latter end. . . .

And thou hast trusted in thy wickedness, and hast said: There is none that seeth me. Thy wisdom, and thy knowledge, this hath deceived thee. And thou hast said in thy heart: I am, and besides me there is no other.

[13] Isa. 13:17–22.

Evil shall come upon thee, and thou shalt not know the rising thereof: and calamity shall fall violently upon thee, which thou canst not keep off: misery shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.

Stand now with thy enchanters, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, in which thou hast laboured from thy youth, if so be it may profit thee any thing, or if thou mayst become stronger.

Thou hast failed in the multitude of thy counsels: let now the astrologers stand and save thee, they that gazed at the stars, and counted the months, that from them they might tell the things that shall come to thee.

Behold they are as stubble, fire hath burnt them, they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flames: there are no coals wherewith they may be warmed, nor fire, that they may sit thereat.

Such are all the things become to thee, in which thou hast laboured: thy merchants from thy youth, every one hath erred in his own way, there is none that can save thee.[14]

To the King Nabuchodonosor through Daniel had come Daniel's exhortation to penance: "Wherefore he hath sent the part of the hand which hath written this that is set down."[15]

And Nabuchodonosor took the words unto his heart: "Now at the end of the days, I Nabuchodonosor lifted up my eyes to heaven, and my sense was restored to me: and I blessed the most High, and I praised and glorified him that liveth for ever: for his power is an everlasting power, and his kingdom is to all generations. And all the inhabi-

[14] Isa. 47:5–15.
[15] Dan. 5:24.

tants of the earth are reputed as nothing before him: for he doth according to his will, as well with the powers of heaven, as among the inhabitants of the earth: and there is none that can resist his hand, and say to him: Why hast thou done it? . . . Therefore I Nabuchodonosor do now praise, and magnify, and glorify the King of heaven: because all his works are true, and his ways judgments, and them that walk in pride he is able to abase."[16]

But when the 70 years were consummated, the "sudden" judgment pronounced against the proud nation came to pass when the son of Nabuchodonosor gave a banquet:

Baltassar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his nobles: and every one drank according to his age.

And being now drunk he commanded that they should bring the vessels of gold and silver which Nabuchodonosor his father had brought away out of the temple, that was in Jerusalem, that the king and his nobles, and his wives and his concubines, might drink in them. . . .

In the same hour there appeared fingers, as it were of the hand of a man, writing over against the candlestick upon the surface of the wall of the king's palace: and the king beheld the joints of the hand that wrote.

Then was the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him: and the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees struck one against the other. . . .

Then Daniel was brought in before the king. And the king spoke, and said to him: Art thou Daniel of the children of the captivity of Juda, whom my father the king brought out of Judea?

I have heard of thee, that thou hast the spirit of the gods,

[16] Dan. 4:31, 32, 34.

and excellent knowledge, and understanding, and wisdom are found in thee.

And now the wise men the magicians have come in before me, to read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof: and they could not declare to me the meaning of this writing.

But I have heard of thee, that thou canst interpret obscure things, and resolve difficult things; now if thou art able to read the writing, and to shew me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with purple, and shalt have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third prince in my kingdom.

To which Daniel made answer, and said before the king: Thy rewards be to thyself, and the gifts of thy house give to another: but the writing I will read to thee, O King, and shew thee the interpretation thereof.

O King, the most high God gave to Nabuchodonosor thy father a kingdom, and greatness, and glory, and honour.

And for the greatness that he gave to him, all people, tribes, and languages trembled, and were afraid of him: whom he would, he slew: and whom he would, he destroyed: and whom he would, he set up: and whom he would, he brought down.

But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit hardened unto pride, he was put down from the throne of his kingdom, and his glory was taken away. . . .

Thou also his son, O Baltassar, hast not humbled thy heart, whereas thou knewest all these things:

But hast lifted thyself up against the Lord of heaven: . . .

Wherefore he hath sent the part of the hand which hath written this that is set down.

And this is the writing that is written: MANE, THECEL, PHARES.

And this is the interpretation of the word. MANE: God hath numbered thy kingdom, and hath finished it.

THECEL: thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting.

PHARES: thy kingdom is divided, and is given to the Medes and Persians.

Then by the king's command Daniel was clothed with purple, and a chain of gold was put about his neck: and it was proclaimed of him that he had power as the third man in the kingdom.

The same night Baltassar the Chaldean king was slain.

And Darius the Mede succeeded to the kingdom, being threescore and two years old.[17]

When Cyrus of the Medes and Persians came to power, he admitted it was through the hand of God of the Jews he had won; his first act therefore was to restore this temple. This was about the year 538 B.C.

Thus saith Cyrus king of the Persians: The Lord the God of heaven hath given to me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judea.

Who is there among you of all his people? His God be with him. Let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judea, and build the house of the Lord the God of Israel: he is the God that is in Jerusalem.

And let all the rest in all places wheresoever they dwell, help him every man from his place, with silver and gold, and goods, and cattle, besides that which they offer freely to the temple of God, which is in Jerusalem.[18]

Israel, chastened with a new heart and a new spirit, turned and lived. The vessel that was broken was remold-

[17] Dan. 5:1–31.
[18] Esdras 1:1–4.

ed in fire by the Divine Potter, that all the nations of the earth might drink of its waters and rejoice. "And the vessel was broken which he was making of clay with his hands: and turning he made another vessel, and it seemed good in his eyes to make it."[19] "He made another vessel!" God never strikes but to heal.

In the history of Israel God punishes both His own people and their enemies, but with a different kind of chastisement: *Punitive* against the Assyrians, it ended in their desolation; *paternal* upon the Jews, it ended in their restoration.

May not those days be upon us once again? May not we all be under the Judgment of God. Without changing a single word, Isaias could repeat to our generation these frightening words: "Come near, ye Gentiles, and hear, and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein, the world, and every thing that cometh forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies."[20]

Could not this war be a chastisement of God upon us all, in two different ways: A chastisement upon evil nations which will end in their destruction; and a paternal correction to milk-and-water Christian nations, to their correction and amendment? God made use of the Assyrians to chastise His people, of the Persians to re-establish them, of Alexander and his successors to protect them. May not evil nations which have borne the fruit of the godlessness

[19] Jer. 18:4.
[20] Isa. 34:1, 2.

which other nations have sown, be the fire of Divine Justice to remold those other nations into new vessels worthy to hold the oil of the charity and justice of God?

This idea of war as a judgment of God upon us all is not a soft theme, but it is a needed theme. If we resent the suggestion that we as a nation are not all we ought be before God, it is because we, too, have been blind to justice. It is not easy to convince a nation that denies sin that the "wages of sin is death"; it is not easy to convince a people that denies the distinction between right and wrong that they may be wrong; it is not easy to awaken a people whose morality is relative to dictatorial barbarians, that they may not be angels. Too long have we who call ourselves Christians been nourished on the diluted sentimentalism of a Liberal Christianity which stripped Christ of His justice and left Him as a mere teacher of humanitarian ethics on a mountain top. Adolf Harnack, who gave us the ungodly human Christ, has done more harm to souls than Adolf Hitler: the first Adolf gave us the crossless Christ without redemption; the second gave us its offspring, the double cross of the swastika with persecution.

Because I say this war is a judgment of God, be not too hasty in saying God is revengeful. Let it be recalled that judgment as chastisement may be of two kinds: external and internal. This war is of the second kind, not the first. An external punishment is arbitrary and capricious, like a spanking for an act of disobedience, for a spanking need not follow an act of disobedience; the modern mother might instead punish her boy by saying: "Now John, just

for that you may see only six murder movies this week, instead of your usual seven."

Internal judgment or punishment, on the contrary, is bound up necessarily with the violation of law. For example, if I violate the laws of nature and do not eat for three days, I suffer a headache. There is nothing arbitrary about that headache. As a chastisement it is one with the refusal to eat. If you deliberately drink poison, you necessarily invoke nausea as a punishment; if you throw yourself from the thirty-fifth floor of a building you may be optimistic because you are alive at the eighteenth, but the sentence of death is already passed, though its execution be momentarily delayed. Go into the prisons, asylums, hospitals, and you will find nature squaring her accounts for violation of her laws. One can almost see there a Judge seated in judgment. Now, what is true of the physical law is true of the moral law: For every action there is a contrary and equal reaction. Neglect the mind and you condemn yourself to ignorance; neglect to exercise and your muscles atrophy; neglect proper diet and the body is dwarfed. Whence comes this judgment from nature, if it has not been placed there by Divine Justice? Search the Scriptures and read of the intrinsic relations between sin and punishment: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption. But he that soweth in the spirit, of the spirit shall reap life everlasting."[21]

[21] Gal. 6:7, 8.

War as a Judgment of God, does not mean that it is a punishment in the sense of being an arbitrary action on the part of God, but in the sense of being an execution of the law of justice. Men are visited with the effects of their own sins. In other words, sin brings adversity and such adversity is the expression of God's chastisement of sin, brought about by the action of man himself.

We are living in such a period of history now — the sad hour wherein we are gathering the bitter fruits of our apostasy from God. Wars from without; class hatreds, bigotry, anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism, atheism, and immoralities from within — are the harvest of our godlessness. I know that there are many who profess belief in God, but they do not act on that belief. What recognition is given to the moral law in politics, economics, or education? How many Americans who say they believe in God went to their church or to their synagogue last Sunday or Sabbath? Do we forget that the evil fruits which St. Paul told the Romans would ripen on the tree of their godlessness are now ripening on the tree of America's godlessness? "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and injustice of those men that detain the truth of God in injustice. . . . Because that, when they knew God, they have not glorified him as God, or given thanks; but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened. For professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. . . . Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, unto uncleanness, to dishonour their own bodies among

themselves."[22] From St. James we learn that not only is our national crime due to godlessness but even wars as well. "From whence are wars and contentions among you? Are they not hence, from your concupiscences, which war in your members?"[23]

We shall do either one of two things: recognize the fact of God's judgment or have it proved against us. If we acknowledge it, and act accordingly, then it shall be made good in us by repentance, restoration, and peace, as it was in the soul of the good Thief who recognized the just deserts of his sins.

Or, if we resist the Judgment of God, it shall be proved against us nevertheless by His Power as it was against the city of Jerusalem, which knew not the time of its visitation. Our greatness is conditioned upon our earnestness in examining our own faults and remedying them. America will be reborn when it stops its roaring self-righteousness, and begins to examine its conscience, not its newspaper editorials: begins to judge itself not by the degeneracy of warring dictators, but by what we ought to be in the eyes of God. If we have not learned to forgive our enemies, we can at least be not overanxious to forgive ourselves. Before we pick up stones to cast at the adulteresses abroad, let us ask ourselves if we are worthy to do so. Our first interest should not be the punishment of modern barbarians, but making ourselves worthy to be the moral leaders of the world, so that after another war, another economic

[22] Rom. 1:18–24.
[23] James 4:1.

and moral collapse will not rebuke us for our failings. Let us give up Stephen Decatur's "my country right or wrong," and substitute for it the promise that the world will never be wrecked by faults of ours.

Let America hearken again to the judgment of God: "Unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish."[24] "Be penitent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."[25]

The choice is clear: We will as a nation either go back to God and the moral law and faith in Christ, or we will rot from within. In exiling God from our national life, our politics, our economics, and our education, it was not His Heart we pierced – it was America we slew! May God forgive us!

[24] Luke 13:3.
[25] Acts 3:19.

VIII

Understanding of Judgment

HISTORY IS ALWAYS PASSING JUDGMENT ON THE DECISIONS of men, for history develops in the framework of Divine Justice and not outside it. The fall of Rome was a judgment on human pride; the Religious Revolution was a judgment on human sin; the French Revolution was a judgment on human avarice and selfishness. And may not this war be a judgment of God on our godlessness – the full germination of a seed we planted only a few centuries ago; the keystone of the arch of apostasy; the crisis of nations who repudiated all universal moral standards; the day when a civilization which sinned with impunity received its wages; "and the wages of sin is death?" Truly indeed the poet wrote:

> O war, thou son of hell
> Whom angry heavens do make their minister.
> (*Henry VI.*)

God does not completely judge man here below, because, since man is immortal, his rewards and punishment can be reserved for eternity. As the businessman waits until the end of the day to make his balance of debits and credits, so does God wait until the end of life. But with nations it is different. Nations as nations have

no immortality. But as "moral persons" or "juridical personalities" they are capable of violation of the moral law. Their judgment must therefore come upon them in *time,* not in eternity. The penalty they bring upon themselves may not be immediate, but it is nevertheless certain and inevitable. The wrongs may be successful for a time, but the judgment is written and only repentance like that of Nineveh can ever blot it out.

If we would understand more clearly how this war is a judgment of God upon the world, not as something capricious like a flash of lightning, but as a chastisement related to our godlessness as blindness is related to the plucking out of an eye, then grasp this psychological truth: Whenever we will something evil, we always produce an effect which we did not intend. This never happens when we do something good. If I use a pencil according to its nature and its purpose, I write; but if I use it contrary to its purpose, for example, to pry open a safe, I destroy the pencil. If I live my life according to its highest purpose, namely, union with God, I perfect it; but if I live according to the animal that is in me, I frustrate my life, just as I frustrate a razor by using it to hew rocks. Not acting according to higher purposes is irrationality, and irrationality is sin, and sin is self-mutilation. If I live as I ought, I become a man; if I live as I please, I may become a beast.

But in willing evil we produce consequences we never intended. A man wills to overdrink; he wills not to ruin his health – but he does. He wills to overeat; he wills not

indigestion, but he gets it. He wills to steal; he wills not the prison, but he gets into it. Monopolistic capitalists who willed only profits for themselves produced something they never intended — labor troubles. Liberalism willed indifference to truth, but it produced an effect it never intended — Fifth Columnists, for if there is no Truth then who can be accused of undermining it? The modern will is like that; it is independent, self-assertive, self-expressive, anarchical, moved by nothing else than its own egotism. But in willing to be independent of God, it created situations it never intended. As we walk in our own self-will we create footpads and soft-shoe thieves who sneak up behind us and hit us over the head just at a moment when we were stupid enough to think all was well.

Now apply this to the war. Who wanted this war? No one, with the possible exception of Russia. England did not want it. France, Belgium, Austria, did not want it. Hitler said he did not want it, by which he probably meant that he did not want it if he could get what he wanted otherwise. But in general, the great mass of people in the world today did not want war. Yet we have war, a demonic, hellish war. Why have we something we did not will? Because we willed something evil; we willed to be without God and His justice, and by willing that initial evil we produced an effect we did not intend, namely, the war. In that sense, this war is a judgment of God. The individual conflicts of our individual wills have merged at last in the great cosmic conflict of collective egotism. The essential irrationalities of sinful man, which

were obscured in the normalities of a false peace, have now come out in war with its lunatic, gigantic collective murder. The cancer from within has finally broken through the surface. "There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed."

I can understand why some who never get below the surface of their souls and talk only about the politics and economics of war, should miss the meaning of world collapse, but it should be clear even to them that their rejection of God and morality, if worked out on a world scale, ends in the defeat of man. This war will not end in the defeat of any nation; it will end in the defeat of man.

The repudiation of Christ, the sanctity of marriage, and His Revelation was reparable, for men still had a rational knowledge of God left. But when nations which believed in God embraced as "friendly" those nations which officially denied God; when His name was banished from our schools; when jurists said there was no source of law except the State, no Truth but individual whims, and no morality but a point of view, then nations brought chaos on themselves like a man who saws off the very limb on which he is sitting. The disobedience of a child who eats a forbidden orange is remediable, but a disobedience which consists in drinking poison is irreparable. It is final and fatal. The freedom by which we willed to be independent of God has now turned into the opposite — slavery. The man who willed to be independent of God wills to be independent of his fellow men. The spokes

which deny their relation to the hub of the wheel soon fall apart. We who denied our dependence on God, have ended by hating one another. As we begot headaches out of our physical organism because we rejected nature's law, so we begot international headaches or wars out of our international societies because we rejected nature's God. That is where we are now. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven and injustice of those men who detain the truth of God in justice."

This world war is just that: the revelation of God's wrath upon a sinful world. I use the hard word "wrath" because it needs explanation for a generation that denies Justice. The wrath of God must not be understood as fitful or freakish. In the strict sense of the term, there is no wrath in God. Because God permits man to be punished by his own iniquities, it does not follow that there is anger in God. "Anger" denotes Justice pronouncing judgment.[1] "It is called anger in God from the fact that it is an expression of anger in ourselves."[2] When a criminal hears the sentence of justice, it angers him and he falsely attributes the anger to the judge. When a child is caught in an act of disobedience, he will say to his mother: "Now, Mama, don't get mad." The mother is not mad; but because the child is angry with himself for being caught or for being disobedient, he excuses himself by imputing wrath to the mother. The ascribing of wrath to God is only a manifestation of our own bad

[1] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, 1–2ae, q. 16, art. 3, *ad* 3.
[2] *Ibid.*, 1, q. 19, art. 11, *ad* 2.

conscience. The universe always becomes an oppressor for him who disturbs its order. As the poet found out, all nature is characterized by:

> Traitorous trueness, loyal deceit
> In faithfulness to Him; in fickleness to me.

Adam hid from God only after his sin, not before. Goodness, truth, and justice always appear as resistance, opposition, or anger to him who rebels against virtue. If I flagrantly disregard traffic laws, the judge will visit upon me the proper sanctions for that violation; if I continue to violate the law and continue to be punished, it will not be long until the whole police force becomes for me an object of wrath. Democracy becomes for the Communist an object of hate because it will not allow him to destroy democracy. God becomes an object of hate for the godless because He permits the man who sins to feel the consequences of sin. Responsibility ceases then to be a formula of Divine Law but becomes Divine anger. Our modern world which now speaks of God as not being good, because He allows this war, forgets that God would not be good if He were not just. Is it not base arrogance for us who have exiled Him from the society of nations, from public affairs, to complain now that He lets society go to pieces? Like a child who, disregarding his mother's advice not to run in the dark, bumps into the door, skins his nose, and then begins to kick the door in anger, so we by disregarding God as the light of the world, bump our heads at the world war and then

begin to kick at the Church doors in anger and say: "Why did God allow this to happen. If God were good there would be no war." I think the answer is just the contrary: Because God is good we have a war! Goodness cannot be indifferent to evil. If we have a war, it is not because God is not just; it may be because we are not just. "The judgment of God is according to truth. . . . And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them who do such things, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? . . . According to thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up to thyself wrath, against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the just judgment of God who will render to every man according to his works."[3] But because God is now manifesting His Justice to the world in the chastisement of war, do not think that God is Love one minute and Justice another. He is always Love and Justice.

All the judgments of God are conditional. Continued forgetfulness of the moral law will bring down upon us the judgment of a God of Justice. Penance, reparation, and amendment of our lives, a return to religion, a rebirth of morality in education, a keen sense of economic and international justice will save us. We are in the position of a man who discovers his health failing because he eats too much sugar. The doctor says: "If you stop eating a pound of chocolates every day, you will live. If not, you will die." If the diabetic refuses to amend and dies, shall we blame the doctor? Translating this into the

[3] Rom. 2:2–5.

language of Scripture: "If that nation against which I have spoken, shall repent of their evils, I also will repent of the evil that I have thought to do to them. And I will suddenly speak of a nation and of a kingdom, to build up and plant it. If it shall do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, I will repent of the good that I have spoken to do unto it."[4] Shall we be so skillful, counting the infinitives in Shakespeare and measuring the heat of the sun and yet miss the meaning of the times? "When it is evening you say: It will be fair weather, for the sky is red. And in the morning: Today there will be a storm for the sky is red and lowering. You know then how to discern the face of the sky and can you not know the sign of the times?"[5]

If the signs of the times are that we have abandoned Christ, let us not add sin to sin by calling God cruel because He allows us to burn our hands if we put them over a fire. God has no passions like us. The changes are in us, not in Him. The sun shines on wax and softens it; it shines on mud and hardens it. The change is not in the sun, but in that upon which it shines. God's justice shines on a soul that loves, and softens it to charity; it shines on a soul that sins, and hardens it to anger. The change is not in God; it is in our attitude toward God.

God has two hands: one is the hand that beckons the just; the other is the hand that summons the unjust. The sheep are on the right hand; the goats are on the left.

[4] Jer. 18:8–10.
[5] Matt. 16:2, 3.

Which hand we choose to be on depends on us, not on Him, for He gives each of us sufficient grace to be saved. Shall it be justice rewarded or injustice judged?

After bitter disillusionment we need a creative revolution based on the love of God. Judgment is stressed because God's love means something; it is not spineless indifference to sin. The Cross of Jesus Christ is His unqualified expression of the hatred of sin. Though our days are wicked they are incapable of ever committing a greater evil than nailing the Son of God to a cross. And though our world should be converted and live in peace, it would never envisage a greater act of love than that done on Calvary when Divine Justice forgave those who pinioned Him, and then gave them as the nourishment of their lives, the very Life they slew. When man's sin had done its worst by lawless hands lifting up on an ignominious tree the Light of the world, from that very scaffold He leaned to plant the kiss of forgiveness on the crimsoned faces of His murderers. There Love, through the untold abyss of suffering smiled back until the very executioners found the highway open to the heart of God. The fires that burned on Calvary's hill were really the fires of His Wrath against evil; the flames enkindled by the fierceness of His love for men. God will not be dethroned; injustice and hate will not conquer though it cost the life of His Divine Son. And in that memorable hour when as He laid down His life and uttered the cry "It is finished," something snapped in the universe. Something was finished – the power of sin to work the final ruin of any

man or any nation. Evil, sin, and injustice end on that cross, but nowhere else. They can survive in parliaments, battlefields, and classrooms, and can remain for a time an element of such force that no human power or device can master them. But under the piercing light of the Cross, they die. For in that Cross there is no sentimental affection; there is the sternness of a great love; the severity of a great tenderness; the revolution that is a restoration — the call to all men to "repent," to follow a course of life, exactly the opposite of what they are doing now.

Will enough of us get back to that cross to save the world? Will enough of us be so dedicated to Truth as to begin to sacrifice where we once enjoyed, to pray where we once sinned, and love those whom before we hated? If there are enough of us to be the leaven in society, then society shall be saved from its judgment. As true lovers of the Justice of God and His Cross, we will never love America because it is great; but America will be great because we love her!

IX

Universality of Judgment

AMERICA TODAY IS TOO INCLINED TO JUDGE ITS CAUSE BY THE wickedness of its enemies rather than by the Justice of God. There is no doubt that if we concentrate on the dictators, we are indeed paragons of virtue; a dirty white shirt looks clean on a coal pile. But America will have sunk to a new low in national morality, or better amorality, if its norm is relative to criminals rather than to the Absolute which is God. In comparison to Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini — how often do we hear politicians or comedians mention the three of them together? — we are paragons of virtue. But in comparison to what we *ought to be* as creatures of God, are we so innocent? We are not interested in showing how wicked are the three villains, but rather *how right we ought to be* before we can call them wicked. That is why we have stressed that this war is a Judgment of God — not an arbitrary and capricious judgment, but rather the moral consequence of our acts. That idea is now completed by affirming that it is a judgment of God upon the entire world — not that all nations are guilty before God in the same degree, for obviously they are not; but that apostasy from God, forgetfulness of His Law, is a world phenomenon, not the exclusive possession of two or three peoples.

What follows will not be popular, but it will be true. Perhaps because it is true it will be unpopular. It is this: The difference between the paganism of Hitler and the paganism of much of the rest of the world, is a difference only of degree, not of kind; of quantity, not of quality. Note that we are comparing paganisms, nothing else. What Hitler hands out in concentrated form, we in America sell piecemeal; what Hitler sells wholesale, we sell retail. Paganism there has a social expression; here it has an individualized expression, but it is still paganism; Hitler tolerates no good thing which is opposed to the evil of his paganism; we allow the good but tolerate the evil, which undermines it, and call it "broad-mindedness." Hitler's evil is an abscess, ours is a boil, but the germ is the same. That he is at war and we are at peace, does not prove there is a difference in quality, for the same philosophy of life can be pursued under false peace as well as by war. Paganism and idolatry and alienation from God have reached full bloom, blossom, and fruit in Germany, but in America the seed has been planted.

What Hitler has done is to push to their logical extreme the very errors that we have so far kept within the four walls of classrooms and between the two covers of a textbook. He has, with a frightening consistency, swept away all laws, customs, politics, and economics which paid lip service to God but denied Him in practice.

What Dostoievsky wrote as far back as 1850 has come to pass: "I should not be surprised if there should suddenly arise from some quarter or another, some low born gentle-

man, or rather of retrograde and cynical demeanor, who, setting his arms akimbo should say to you all 'How now, gentlemen? Would it not be a good thing, if, with one consent, we were to kick all this solemn wisdom to the winds, and to send those logarithms to the devil and to begin our lives again according to our own stupid whims."[1]

That is precisely what some national leaders have done; they have externalized the rottenness of the world and pushed rebellion against God to its logical conclusion of rebellion against man.

Now for some evidence that the difference between the paganization of life in Nazi Germany and the paganization of life in the United States is only a difference of quantity not quality.

First, consider the common philosophy of the country. There is not a single secular college or university in the United States that does not teach in one form or another the philosophy of Pragmatism. Pragmatism is that particular philosophy which denies that there is any absolute truth, absolute goodness, or absolute justice. The most common expression of the philosophy of pragmatism is that truth and goodness and justice are relative to the utility of the individual. As one Professor at Harvard taught, if the idea of God is useful for you, God exists. If the idea is not useful for you, then God does not exist. Hitler in so many words has said to us: "You Americans are right in saying that there is no such thing as truth or goodness or justice. You are right, too, in saying that

[1] *Letters of the Underworld.*

these things are relative to needs. But I say that they are not relative to the needs of the individual as you do, but to the needs of the race. If, therefore, you Americans eliminate the moral law and God from your education on the basis of private utility, I can by exactly the same philosophy obliterate nations on the basis of what is useful to the German Reich. If you get rid of God on the grounds of utility, why cannot I get rid of nations?" What is the difference between his pragmatism and ours?

There is no difference in kind, there is only difference in degree.

Consider this second fact:

There are, every year in the United States, about one and a half million couples who, before a representative either of God or of the State, pledge themselves to love one another until death does them part. One out of every five of these marriages ends in divorce or a repudiation of contract. Hitler and his paganism says to us: "You Americans do not believe that a contract is inviolable; neither do I. You believe that treaties can be broken; so do I. There is this difference, however, between you and me: All that you do by your infidelity is to destroy the family; I am not interested in destroying anything as small as the family, I am interested only in destroying nations. But the philosophy I invoke is no different than yours. You say a contract made at the altar can be broken even for the sake of pleasure. Why cannot I say a contract made at Geneva or Versailles can be broken? Will you who profess to believe in God hold me to a more binding

morality than I who set myself up as God? Am I not doing to the international courts of justice, precisely what 20 per cent of you Americans are doing to the domestic courts of justice – repudiating solemn obligations, rejecting loyalties rooted in God!" What is the difference between his paganism and ours? It is a difference only in degree not in kind. Justice begins to be slightly ridiculous when a divorced man, living with his third or fourth wife, in conscious violation of God's law, goes into a fit of rage because Hitler broke his treaty. I am not saying that Hitler is justified in breaking his treaties because we break ours; I am saying that none of us are justified, for we are all under God and we will suffer the penalties for the violation of law.

Consider another example. American pagans teach that life may be limited by the economic. This doctrine is more familiarly known as birth control. In other words, if there is not sufficient economic means to send five children to college, then the free, spontaneous fruits of love must be curtailed and limited to fit the economic. Hitler uses exactly the same principle, though he applies it differently. He, too, claims that the human is subject to the economic, but instead of playing with individual human lives, he plays with nations; instead of artificially limiting human births he artificially limits the national lives of Poland, Norway, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, and Austria for the economic prosperity of Germany. In both cases there is the subordination of the human to the economic; Hitler plays more loosely with

the principle than many of our sociologists, but the difference is only one of degree, not of kind.

Finally, consider our attitude toward religion. Our system of education is based upon the assumption that religion and morality are not essential. Hitler shows the falsity of that position by arguing as Rousseau did against Luther's idea of grace. Rousseau said to Luther: "You say, 'Grace does not perfect man intrinsically, but is only something extrinsic, like a cloak over a man, or wings of a hen over a chicken. Man remains intrinsically corrupt.' " Rousseau concluded: "If grace is extrinsic to man, then it is unnecessary. Therefore eliminate it." Hitler argues: "If morality and religion are not the soul of civilization and an integral part of education, then do away with them for they are external and unnecessary; they only clutter up the national life. We are agreed on principle that religion is not essential; we differ only in our zeal for the principle. You in America say we can be indifferent to religion. I say: if it is indifferent, persecute it until you have only essentials."

There is no difference in quality, but only in quantity, for history well attests that indifference to God unvariably leads to persecution of His servants. Herod, who was indifferent as to the birth of the Prince of Peace, within two years hunted down the Babe with an army of swords. Pilate, who was indifferent to Truth, ended by nailing Him to the Cross. The seed of religious indifference has borne its fruit in Germany. Let him who has a head to think, think!

Do not misunderstand. We are not as bad as Hitler; all we are trying to do is bring out the absurdity of the pagan way of life which considers us just, because our enemies are so wicked. If we are not all we ought to be in God's sight — and that is presently our standard of judgment — does it not follow that our attitude toward the war should be more humble? Should we not, conscious of our own sins and of our solidarity with a sinful world, look upon ourselves as also being under Divine judgment?

We are not a Christian nation; neither are we a pagan nation. We are not a God-fearing people as a whole, neither are we godless. We are what might be called "neutral." We treat God as we might a President Emeritus of a university. He has survival value, but is without authority. Many Americans will admit that God plays even an important role in their individual lives; they will also admit that He is the Order behind the cosmos, but between those two extremes of the individual heart and of a vague cosmic Presence, in the social order of politics, economics, international relations, business, and education, the majority of Americans hardly ever advert to God. Our whole national thinking is geared to a tolerance of religion alongside the secular, but to no organic connection between the two. Religion has been treated solely as an individual concern, while national economic and political well-being are considered social. Instead of creating an areligious or neutral social order as many planned, they created one where irreligion preempted the social order. When the eyes are excluded from

the human organism we have not an eyeless man, but a blind man. Exiling religion from the social structure and education was not a negation; it was a privation of due order. The body without the soul is not a living machine; it is a cadaver. A nation without God is not humanist; it is godless.

What shall we do? Make ourselves worthy to be defenders of God's justice. That means first repentance, then action. Humbly must we confess that we, too, have contributed some measure to world disintegration, for too many of us have made the economic the end of living, rather than its means; too many of us have become very indifferent to God and morality and thus paved the way for persecution in other lands. Did not our first President warn that "we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards eternal rules of order and right which heaven itself has ordained."

If the only reason we arm is because we hate an enemy, then the spoils of our victory shall be only vengeance. How shall we know what kind of order shall be rebuilt unless we know what we are fighting for? Shall the world be rebuilt according to the same plan that brought on this conflict, with money as the goal of economic existence; with its monopolistic capitalism; with its struggle between capital and labor; with its breakup of family; with its education devoid of moral responsibility; with its degeneration of democracy into an arithmocracy which makes the majority right because it is a majority? Victory over

enemies is not worth fighting for just to maintain a *status quo;* it is worth fighting for only if we use victory to build a new order on different lines where the victory will win the cooperation of the defeated, because it is *just* under God.

There is one thing certain: this present world order will not survive this world disorder. What the future will be depends upon the motivations of those leaders who are charged with its re-establishment. If we choose the pagan way of life, then we shall be worse than before, for a man who has reached maturity and then becomes childish is not as clever as he was when a child. Nations must progress morally and sacrificially, or else go backward. There will be no such thing as turning back to monopolistic capitalism, but only to rotted capitalism, which is Communism; there can be no going back to our pragmatism with its notion that truth is utility; we can go back to what Hitler and Stalin have shown to be its logical conclusion: Power Politics, in which Truth is created by might. The monkey who acts like a monkey is funny; the man who acts like a monkey is pathetic. We will, therefore, not be the same as before: we will be better or we will be worse.

We are under the Judgment of God! We have violated His Laws, exiled Him from the social order, and not even whispered His name to our children. We could not expect to violate a law of nature with such abandon and hope to escape; we could not evade the laws of health and expect to escape disease. What are we going to do about it? Go on talking about freedom and forget about the

Justice of God? History knows no other way by which nations escape the visitation of their iniquities save by a return to God through a rebirth of service. This is sound Judaism! This is sound Christianity! This used to be sound Americanism!

Would to God that all believers in religion, instead of accommodating God to the way the godless lived, would preach once more guilt and repentance. Would to God another Abraham Lincoln would arise to say to America in our day what that great President said to America in his day:

"It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that these nations only are blessed. . . . And inasmuch as we know that by His divine law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements of this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown; but we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand that preserved

us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior virtue and wisdom of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us. It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness."

In our own times we find such affirmation of the war as the Judgment of God even in the afflicted nations. For example, Archbishop Saliége of Toulouse in a pastoral letter to his people on the occasion of the fall of France said: "Do not say: 'Our cause is just. God will make it triumph.' In the Gospel it is written: 'Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice.'

"Let us say rather: we must work, we must endure, and God will come to our assistance. Have we endured enough? Have we prayed enough? Have we repaid sixty years in which the spirit of France has suffered all the sicknesses of the mind; in which the French will has become weakened; in which French morality has sunk; in which anarchy has so strangely taken strength? God have pity on us. We have driven God from the school and from the forum. We have robbed our priests and our nuns. We have stripped the Church. We have established and multiplied the places of evil. We have supported unhealthy and depraved literature. We have supported white slavery,

the sale of human flesh. We have profaned the Sunday, forgotten Your Commandments, abused the work of women and of children. O Lord, we ask for pardon."

From England we hear the same idea, as Cardinal Hinsley tells his people: "We, too, have sinned." We hear it also in the voice of another clergyman: "It is the Christian who ought to see and declare that the present state of Europe is the culmination of a trial which has been proceeding over a period of centuries and the registering of a sentence which will have to be proclaimed in more and more violent terms until its justice is acknowledged by all whom it concerns, for European man has been proudly emancipating himself from the rule of God. . . . These ills register God's judgment and condemnation, and they are His summons to repentance. We cannot receive salvation from on high, until we acknowledge the doom that we deserve."

Which shall it be? Shall we concentrate on the evils of our enemies or on the Justice of God? I say, fear Him, not as we fear evil, but fear Him as we fear losing what we love. The more we love anyone the greater is our fear lest misfortune or death steal that person away. So with ourselves; our love of God as a nation must begin with "fear," for the "fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom": first the fear of the sanctions of His Justice, then the fear of betraying the blessings of Mercy. God is no tyrant waiting to catch us in our misdemeanors; if He were He should have blotted us all out of existence centuries ago. But He is Divine Justice and as such we cannot

expect to rebel against His love or escape the consequences for "by whatsoever a man sinneth, so also shall he be punished." The law of God is not arbitrary or external but just and inexorable, for the wages of sin is death. Once we recognize this Justice, we prepare ourselves for that holier fear — the fear of hurting the thing we love, which makes us cry out with the publican: "Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner." It is new hearts we need. "And he that shall overcome, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God; and he shall go out no more; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. And to the angel of the church of Laodicea, write: 'These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, who is the beginning of the creation of God: I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest: I am rich, and made wealthy, and have need of nothing: and knowest not, that thou art wretched and miserable and poor, and blind and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold fire tried, that thou mayest be made rich; and mayest be clothed in white garments, and that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear; and anoint thy eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. Such as I love, I rebuke and chastise. Be zealous therefore, and do penance. Behold, I stand at the gate and

knock. If any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.' "[2]

Our insight into this war would be keener if, instead of regarding Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin as *creators* of wicked philosophy of life, we regarded them as its *creatures*. You can plant acorns on glass, but they will never grow; you could put fish in alcohol, but they will never thrive; you could put Hitler in Ireland, but there would never be Nazism. There must be a proper climate and environment for the flowering of any seed. Nazism, Fascism, and Communism are to a great extent the creations of a civilization which has repudiated the moral law of God. They represent the sickness of the world in its most virulent form; they are the vomit of a stomach already de-Christianized and therefore brutalized. Unless there had already been a breakdown of morality, education, the family, and social justice, these "isms" could not control people; the people must to some extent be ready to be controlled.

Now, to the extent that we in America continue to de-Christianize and paganize our education and the family we are creating a favorable soil for tyranny and dictatorship. And if we doubt that godlessness can wreck and ruin America, then answer this question: Why is every anti-American movement always atheistic? There are no Fifth Columnists in our religious schools, but they are in every godless movement. What would happen to America to-

[2] Apoc. 3:12–20.

morrow if all our children who are educated without God and the moral law, suddenly decided to live out their godlessness? The roots of Nazism and every other "ism" are there, if we would but open our eyes. The way to save America and to be genuinely patriotic is to eradicate from our land that apostasy from God which makes Hitlerism possible. It is not democracies which are right and dictatorships which are wrong, for both can be wrong when both are godless.

What good will it do to defeat Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin – I am sorry to offend the Liberals by including Stalin – unless we are prepared to build a different and a better world than the one which is collapsing? Shall we build another godless world on top of this world war as we did in 1918, or one in Christ Jesus? Our call is not to realize certain democratic ideals but to accept the one *divine reality.* We are not invited to go *somewhere,* but to return to *someone.* America has a body and a soul. Its body is stronger than its soul; its machines more powerful than its will; its trust in preparedness greater than its trust in God. Fear not those who kill the body, but those who can kill the soul. That is why it is not a single victory America must win, but a double one – over the enemy from without and the enemy from within. And this much is absolutely certain: America will never be defeated from without so long as we are not defeated from within.

X

A Declaration of Dependence

THERE HAS NEVER BEEN AN ANTI-AMERICAN MOVEMENT IN the United States that did not, in one form or another, appeal to the Declaration of Independence. Communists base their right to destroy democracy on the Declaration of Independence; monopolistic capitalists invoke it to escape even a just government supervision for the common good; the so-called Progressive educators appeal to it to mold children independently of religion; spurious defenders of civil liberties tearfully quote it to justify every attack upon the foundations of liberty; in a word, the Declaration of Independence has come to mean for a group of our fellow citizens nothing other than independence of authority, law, and order.

In these days when everyone talks of rights and few of duties, it is important for us Americans to recall that the Declaration of Independence is also a Declaration of Dependence. The Declaration of Independence asserts a double dependence: dependence on God, and dependence on law as derived from God.

Where do we get our right of free speech? Where do we get freedom of conscience? Whence is derived the right to own property? Do we get these rights and liberties from the State? If we did, the State could take them away. Do

we get them from the Federal Government in Washington? If we did, the Federal Government could take them away. Whence comes the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

Read the Declaration of Independence and there find the answer: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are *endowed by their Creator* with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Notice these words: *The Creator has endowed men with rights and liberties;* men got them from God! In other words, we are dependent *on God,* and that initial dependence is the foundation of our independence.

Suppose we interpret independence, as some liberal jurists do, as independence of God; then rights and liberties come either from the State, as Bolshevism contends, or from the Dictators, as Nazism and Fascism believe. But if the State or the Dictator is the creator of rights, then the State or the Dictator can dispossess men of their rights. That is why in those countries where God is most denied, man is most tyrannized, and where religion is most persecuted, man is most enslaved. It is only because we are dependent on God that we are independent as persons from the total will of any man on earth.

Let us not think that by denying God we will have purchased independence. The pendulum of the clock that wanted to be free from its point of suspension, found that on becoming independent of its suspension, it was no longer free to swing. The Communists and the Nazis and

the Fascists who denied God as the source of their freedom got in the end the inglorious freedom of State prisoners.

Democracy is based not on the Divine Right of Kings but on the Divine Right of Persons. Each person has a value because God made him, not because the State recognizes him. The day we adopt in our democracy the already widespread ideas of some American jurists that right and justice depend on convention and the spirit of the times, we shall write the death warrant of our independence. When watchmakers set watches according to their whims and not according to a fixed point of reference, such as the sun, we will no longer have the right time; when aviators build machines in repudiation of the laws of gravitation, we will no longer fly; and when we deny God as the foundation of our rights, we shall no longer have rights. The Declaration of Independence, I repeat, is a Declaration of Dependence. We are independent of dictators because we are dependent on God.

Because we are dependent on God, it follows that it is religion's first duty to preserve that relationship between man and his Creator. Religion and democracy, therefore, are not the same. Some religious leaders never once in their discourses mention the name of God, but actually define religion as democracy. Certain alarmists, when a personal representative of the President was sent to the Holy Father, shrieked against union of Church and State — but they do not protest against the identification of religion and democracy, which is an insult to both religion and democracy. If religion is democracy, then let us drop

religion and become State servants; if democracy is religion, then let us scrap democracy and enter a monastery. Religion is not democracy. The two are as different as soul and body. Religion is primarily for the salvation of man's soul, and democracy is primarily for the prosperity and common good of the nation. God is not Caesar and Caesar is not God. Have our so-called religious leaders forgotten: "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God, the things that are God's"?[1]

Once religion abdicates its soul-saving mission as its primary end, it becomes as ridiculous as mathematicians turned theologians. There is too much of an interchange between professions. We think that because a man is an expert in one field he is an expert in all. Because Einstein knows the relativity of space and time, some think that he should therefore be regarded as an authority on God. This is as incongruous as that a theologian should be consulted as an expert on space and time. Both of them would be talking about something neither of them know anything about. There should be standards for all professions. A barber, in order to get a license, must know how to cut hair; a plumber must know how to thread pipe; a stonecutter must know how to chisel — in the right sense of the term. But in the field of religion it is too commonly assumed that a man can be an authority without being religious. A minimum condition that should be imposed upon all who talk religion is that they say their prayers.

The primary service of religion is not to preserve a

[1] Matt. 22:21.

democracy identical with our own, for if it were, there could be no religion where there was a method of government different from our own. The primary business of religion is God; to bring man to God and God to man. Religion's service to democracy is secondary and indirect; that is, by concentrating on spiritualizing the souls of men, it will diffuse through political society an increased service of justice and charity rooted in God.

There is no such thing as saving democracy alone. Democracy is a branch, not a root. The root of democracy is the recognition of the value of a person as a creature of God. To save democracy alone is like saving the false teeth of a drowning man. First save the man and you will save his teeth. First preserve belief in God as the source of rights and liberties and you will save democracy. But not vice versa. Religion's greatest contribution to democracy is by serving something else. Just as a man loves a woman best on condition that he loves virtue more, so religion serves democracy best when it loves God most of all: "Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."[2]

Too long have men taught that God must serve democracy; it is now time to affirm the contrary. Democracy should serve religion — likewise indirectly, of course, in the sense that it will be obedient to a justice born of God and not of expediency; that it will give equal economic opportunities to all, provide the normal comforts of life, guarantee employment, in order that citizens being freed

[2] Matt. 6:33.

from economic or political injustices will be free to serve their God. Democracy serves religion indirectly by removing those obstacles and disadvantages which stand in the way of man achieving the more glorious liberty of the children of God. As Washington told us: ". . . let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education or minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles."

Not only does the Declaration of Independence affirm dependence on God, it also affirms dependence on law. After saying that our rights come from God, this historic document adds: ". . . to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." This means that all men come to the State with rights antecedent and independent of the State, because so endowed by God. Persons so divinely endowed transfer this authority to a ruler whom they designate, or in the words of the Declaration of Independence: "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." But what interests us now is that governments so instituted have as their mission to secure and preserve rights and liberties given by God. In other words, we are dependent *on the authority of a good government for the preservation of our rights.* Authority exists to preserve freedom. This needs to be stressed because there is too general a tendency in our country today

to interpret freedom as absence of law and restraint; there are even those who would oppose liberty and law by defining freedom as the right to do whatever you please. There are certain groups and organizations in this country that will defend you if you evade the draft, slap a teacher, teach immorality to students, hiss the President, or do anything contrary to law and justice. Their defense of your anarchy will be in the name of liberty. They talk about freedom as if it were an end in itself, a life rather than an atmosphere of life. That is why they never tell us what we are going to do *with* freedom. They forget that freedom *from* something, implies freedom *for* something, as this story illustrates: A liberal one day went up to a taxi driver and said: "Are you free?" The taxi driver who hadn't had a job in two days said: "Yes, I'm free." The Liberal left shouting: "Hurrah for freedom!" In just such a plain way as this our modern leaders are leaving us up in the air about freedom. Freedom from all dependence, such as dependence on God, dependence on law, dependence on truth, is not independence – it is the beginning of slavery. Freedom, it must be reaffirmed, is not a physical power, but a moral power. Of course, you can do anything you please, you can shoot your neighbor's chickens and stuff your mother's mattress with razor blades. You *can* do these things, but *ought* you? Freedom is a *moral* power; not a *physical* power; not the right to do what you *please,* but the right to do whatever you *ought.* But *ought* implies law, and law implies order, and order implies justice, and justice implies God.

There are two classes of citizens in the United States: those who interpret the Declaration of Independence as meaning independence of God and independence of law; and those who hold that we are independent because we believe in God as the root of law and believe in law as the ground of freedom. We Catholics belong to the second group. There are many others, cutting across all religious classes, who believe similarly. And to them we appeal to save true Americanism by a social and national affirmation of our dependence on God, particularly in these days of national conscription. Our government after due debate and consideration of national danger has ordered national conscription. Therefore we accept it as the law of the land. But what would happen if, while assenting to it, we did not as a nation declare our dependence on God? The point is that mobilization of man power on the part of the State could be very dangerous if it were not compensated for by a deepened religious sense of dependence on God.

This is easy to understand. There are many cohesions and groupings to which men belong that are not exclusive and possessive. For example, a man who belongs to an athletic club is not excluded from joining the Plumbers Union or a Bridge Club. But there is one grouping which is much more exclusive and that is the nation; a citizen of one country cannot be a citizen of another. Because a nation is by its nature exclusive of other nations and other peoples, it is very easy for it to become exclusive of all other loyalties, including God. The mobilization of man power which may indeed be very desirable if we are in

danger of attack, would be fraught with evil if at the same time men did not affirm their dependence on God.

Suppose in a crisis such as this, we forgot our Declaration of Dependence; suppose we forgot there was no higher community of men than the State; suppose that, in a day when the State claims the body, we failed to affirm that our souls are our own by offering them to God — it would not be long until the State, seeing that we recognized nothing else but the State, could claim us body and soul. Thus while organizing to combat the totalitarian evil abroad we would become its victims at home.

That is why it is particularly important for us as a nation to reaffirm our allegiance to another community, namely, the brotherhood of men under the Fatherhood of God. The more and more unified we become in an army, the greater the need that we declare our obligation to God from whom we derive our inalienable rights and to whose Divine Providence we have entrusted this nation. It is illuminating to observe that in every State in the modern world where there has been universal conscription *to the exclusion of God,* there has been erected a slave state.

By a national act of adoration and petition we can prevent conscription of man power from becoming conscription of man; by it we affirm that the army is not the whole of life. In the clear language of St. Thomas in his commentary on the Politics of Aristotle, we must remember that "man belongs to the community, but not according to the whole of his being." He belongs to the community as an individual, because he is part of a whole; but he does not

belong to the community as a person endowed with an immortal soul, for the spirit can be a part of nothing. Man belongs to the army as regards his *function,* but not as regards his *inalienable rights* which come to him from God. Man in his military service is not, like a plant eaten by an animal, wholly transformed into the Moloch of the State. There is within him something the State cannot possess, namely, his soul. But unless citizens take cognizance of the fact that they have souls by declaring their loyalty to God, the State may say: "Since you profess no other allegiance than to us, then you belong wholly to us." That is totalitarianism — man totally, body and soul, belonging to the State.

Be not deceived by slogans about democracy, as if it were like an heirloom which once possessed needs only to be preserved. Democracy is an endowment like life, and needs to be repurchased in each new generation. Democracy is not the luxury of civilization; it is not affluence which obscures injustice by the comparative comfort of the oppressed; it is not a license which allows freedom to be destroyed by invoking rights without duties.

Christianity has a new battle before it; it is no longer with scorn that calls itself Skepticism; no longer with dilettantism which masquerades as Learning; no longer with injustice which called itself Progress — but with the new Pride which would free governments from the moral restraints of God and authority. In the hour that is dawning the Church must defend democracy not only from those who enslave it from without, but even from those who

would betray it from within. And the enemy from within is he who teaches that freedom of speech, *habeas corpus,* freedom of press, and academic freedom, constitute the essence of democracy. They do not. They are merely the accompaniments and safeguards of democracy. Given a freedom which is independent of God, independent of the moral law, independent of inalienable rights as the endowment of the Divine Spirit, America could vote itself out of democracy tomorrow. How can we continue to be free unless we keep the traditions, the grounds, and the roots upon which freedom is founded? We could not call our soul our own unless God exists. Why, we would not even have a soul! Democracy has within itself no inherent guarantees of freedom; these guarantees are from without. That is why I say our Declaration of Dependence on God is the condition of a Declaration of Independence of Dictatorship. The greatest defenders of America are not necessarily those who talk most about freedom and democracy; it is the sick who talk most about health. For that reason there should be less loose talk about democracy and freedom; instead of judging religion by its attitude toward democracy we should begin to judge democracy by its attitude toward religion. For in a crisis such as this America will save her Stars and Stripes by grounding them on other stars and stripes than those which are on the flag, namely, the stars and stripes of Christ, by whose stars we have been illumined and by whose stripes we have been healed.

XI

The Papacy and International Order

HOW CAN INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE BE RESTORED TO THIS warring world? Reason demands three conditions for the establishment of a just international peace: (1) a fixed concept of justice; (2) an authority outside the nations to preserve that fixed justice; (3) that same authority preserving the fixed concept of justice must itself be unarmed and responsible.

1. *A fixed concept of justice,* i.e., one universal principle of right and wrong. If justice is relative to each nation, then the invasion of another nation is right when we do it, and wrong when someone else does it. Justice would then degenerate into expediency. Justice is not subjective, but objective; it is grounded in the natural order established by God. It may be defined, therefore, as a constant and permanent determination to give to each that which is his due. Just as the concept of a square never varies, so the concept of justice must be so fixed that men and nations will continue to speak of those who practice it as "being on the square."

2. But in order that this fixed justice be administered, it must be rooted in an authority outside the nations, namely, in an ethical and moral institution rather than a political one. The reason is obvious. In all trials the judge

must not be one of the litigants. Justice would be a farce if in one trial the defendant was the judge, and in another the prosecutor. Justice would end only in a conflict of national moralities if there were no morality outside and above the nations themselves. You cannot measure boards with an elastic ruler and you cannot judge nations with an elastic morality. When there is a dispute among children in the third grade about the spelling of the word "pneumonia," the appeal must not be made to the students, but outside them, namely, a dictionary. In like manner, the justice which governs nations is not of their making but God's.

Furthermore, in order that all nations be subject to that fixed concept of justice, the authority which binds them into a unity must itself be not one of the nations; it must be supranational and therefore international. You cannot pack your trunk for a week end, if you go into the trunk; neither can you tie the nations into a unity if you are one of the nations. If you do, the League will mean obeying someone else's politicians, and heaven knows, if we will not obey our own politicians, we will not obey someone else's.

3. This supranational authority must be unarmed and responsible. *Unarmed,* because otherwise decisions will be based on power and not on justice. "Law is reason minus passions." It must be also *responsible,* in the sense that it must not *create* right, but promulgate it. The authority to administer justice must come from above, and therefore involve a sense of stewardship and duty. One of the

reasons why the deliverances of international courts of justice are capricious and arbitrary is that they assume that they *originate* and *create* justice, rather than interpret and declare it as responsible subjects of Almighty God.

Where on the face of the earth do we find these three conditions for the administration of international justice fulfilled? Where is there a fixed concept of justice? Is there any institution which in the course of centuries has consistently refused to change either the natural law or the revealed word of Christ to win the favor of the world, which has refused to compromise the moral law to suit unmoral ways of living, or to break the marriage bond for those who wanted divorce, but which to each new generation said: "If Justice were of our making, we could unmake it, but we have no rights over the immutable Truth and Justice of God"?

Is there an institution which, charged with the preservation of a fixed justice, is also outside the nations, not only because its mission is spiritual, but because, being the greatest of all religions, it has the smallest of all sovereignties: 108 acres on which its Shepherd may feed and pasture her three hundred and eighty million sheep?

Is there an institution which is so unarmed that one soldier with a machine gun could conquer its guards with their blunted spears in ten minutes; and which is responsible because possessing a delegated power: "Go teach ye all nations[1] . . . thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not pre-

[1] Matt. 28:19.

vail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."[2]

Though the answer of reason is the Church, there is tremendous opposition to its ethical and moral leadership. During the past fifty years the world has resented the suggestion of an unarmed, responsible, supranational moral force as custodian of a fixed concept of justice. Here are the facts: When the Hague Conference was held in 1889, there was a suggestion made that the Holy See be represented as a moral authority. Only one representative of the nations there present favored the inclusion; and that was the Queen of the Netherlands. In 1907 there was a similar exclusion of the spiritual authority of the Church.

Then came the world war and on April 26, 1915, the Secret Treaty of London was signed, Article 15 of which reads: "France, Great Britain, and Russia shall support such opposition as Italy may make to any proposal in the direction of introducing representatives of the Holy See in any peace negotiations or regulations for the settlement of questions raised by the present war." Article 16: "The present arrangement shall be held secret."

At the close of the world war the Treaty of Versailles was signed, but its preamble was unlike all others, for by this time not only men but nations had apostatized from God. Every other treaty involving all the nations of

[2] Matt. 16:18.

Europe had begun as the last such treaty – the Treaty of Vienna in 1815 – had begun: "In the name of the most Holy and Undivided Trinity." But this new one signaling the advent of a world made safe for democracy, but not Divinity, began "In the name of the High Contracting Parties." Look at how low the High Contracting Parties are today, only 23 years later!

When Benedict XV published his peace proposals during the last war, Ambassador Jusserand of France called on President Wilson and commented on the excellence of the proposals, to which the President retorted with ill humor – I am quoting verbatim: "Why does he want to butt in?"

But all that is in the past. What is the attitude of much of the world today in the midst of war? Note the change! For the past fifty years the world said: "We want no spiritual authority," but for the past two years it asks: "Why doesn't your spiritual authority have more authority?" The world spent one hundred and fifty years exiling a spiritual force from international relations, and now is angry because that same spiritual force has not kept peace in the house from which it was exiled. The very ones who some twenty years ago did all they could to make the Church weak, now hate it because it is not strong. The very ones who thought the Vatican should have supported the anti-Christianity of the Reds in Spain, now complain that the Church is not more vigorous against anti-Christianity. They who formerly argued that if a Catholic was a good citizen, it was in spite of his faith, now say his faith

could do more to help the country. When Catholic schools were closed in Mexico and Russia, they said it was done in the name of liberal democracy; when they were closed in Germany, they said it was done in the name of anti-Christianity. They drove away the shepherd and his sheep and then complained they had no wool. They broke the scales of justice held by the Church, and then blamed the Church for their false measures. They tore down the signposts of peace which the Church erected and blamed the Church because they lost their way.

But this opposition is not only a proof that a spiritual unarmed authority with a fixed concept of justice is part of an inherited tradition; it is also an admission of bankruptcy of a League of Nations which claims to be the judge of everything, including religion. A healthier state of affairs, men now see, would be one in which moral and ethical groups, and not political groups, decide on the rightness or wrongness of violence.

The world does not know it, but the Church is doing at this moment what it has traditionally done through the centuries, preserving justice during war. She is doing for justice what London is doing for art. Just as in these days when barbarians rain down fiery death from the skies, the British Government packs up its art treasures, sends them out into the country to safe hiding places until the war is over, when the treasures will once more be restored to galleries for a people that needs art for its culture and tradition; so, too, in times of war throughout the ages, when men scorned Justice and Charity and settled their disputes

by violence, the Church gathered to herself the immutable principles of Christ so that when wars ceased, the nations who repudiated them could once more rebuild civilization anew upon them.

But there is this difference between the attitude of the world to the Church now and in the past. Previously when men's passions made them forget justice momentarily, they nevertheless wanted to return to justice when their passions subsided. They did wrong, but they never denied it was wrong. Today, on the contrary, nations not only violate the laws of justice, but they even deny there is justice. Because there is a repudiation of a fixed standard of justice, men and nations have no concept of an equilibrium which should be restored after the violation of law. The geometrician who in his inaccuracies or the slip of a pen draws an isosceles triangle with all unequal sides, can repair his error as long as he preserves his standard that an isosceles triangle has two equal sides. In the days of Christian civilization when international equilibrium was disturbed, men could always resort to the due order of things because a moral authority preserved it during their infidelities. But today when international justice is identified with expediency, men no longer know what is right when they want to get back to it. That makes regeneration and reconstruction well-nigh impossible.

But whether or not they will accept a justice grounded in the objective order, the fact remains that the Church is keeping it for them, if they want it. When this war is over, the Church which will be the only institution to

organically survive it as it has survived all wars in the past, will go to the wounded and bleeding nations and say: "Here, my sons, are the principles of immutable justice, the rejection of which brought you into war." Whether or not the nations will accept those principles as the foundation upon which they will reconstruct a just international order, remains to be seen. But they can be sure of this: if they continue to exile morality and justice in the next postwar generation as they did in the last, they will only prepare for another dirty mess wherein apostate democracies by progressive demoralization will outbid one another in the surrender of the last vestige of Christianity. The danger is that as this war goes on, men will consider peace only as a cessation of hostilities rather than the product of justice, just as presently they think freedom is the absence of law rather than the environment of duty. The mistake the world makes is to think that peace is something directly sought; it is not. Rather, peace is indirectly achieved. It is a by-product, like bloom on a cheek. First you have health, then you have the glorious bloom. In like manner, first you have justice, then you have peace. But to seek peace without Justice is only to put rouge on the international cheek — and the first good rainstorm of selfishness will wash it away.

It is not peace we must work toward as if peace were something static like a tree, or the maintenance of the *status quo* or the preservation of the present division of wealth. Peace is not a passive, but an active condition; it is balance in movement; the tranquillity of order. For that

reason our Lord never said: "Blessed are the peaceful" but "Blessed are the peacemakers."

There is the dilemma which confronts the nations: will they return to an ethical concept of justice or continue to confuse justice with expediency, for example, by calling Russia, as we do, "a friendly nation"? Shall we think that our dignity is lowered by admitting a universal moral principle, even when it goes against us?

We are living in days of fear and there is no escape from fear except *Trust*. Everything else we trusted has failed us: universal education, progress, science, liberalism, totalitarianism. There is no one left to trust but the Father whose house as prodigal children we left for a false freedom.

There is hope for those who trust in the only moral left in the world; the authority that did not tamper with Christ's message because he met a liberal or a scientist or a bolshevik on the roadway: the only authority that is right, not when the world is right, but right when the world is wrong. Trust in that religious authority would reverse the present order and inaugurate a reign where, instead of politics setting limits to morality and religion, morality and religion would begin to set limits to politics.

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